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THE LIFE & JOURNEYS
OF
ST. PAUL

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THE LIFE & JOURNEYS

OF

ST. PAUL

BRIEFLY TOLD FOR LOVING STUDENTS

BY

ELLEN PALMER

AUTHOR OF "HEROES OF ANCIENT GREECE,"
"THE STANDARD BEARER," ETC.

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PROPERTY OF
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THE LIFE AND JOURNEYS OF ST. PAUL

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE New Testament of our Lord is contained in twenty-seven separate books. Of these, five are written by His beloved disciple, St. John the Evangelist ; two by St. Peter, who was—with St. John and St. James—the most intimate companion of our Lord upon earth ; one by St. Matthew the Apostle, who followed our Lord through the greatest part of His earthly ministry ; one by St. Mark, the companion of the Apostles ; one by St. James, and one by St. Jude, his brother, both of whom were kinsmen of our Saviour, but who simply styled themselves “servants of Jesus Christ.” Two books of the New Testament are written by St. Luke, and the remaining fourteen are Epistles from St. Paul to Christian Churches, or pastoral Epistles to members of his flock.

Who was St. Paul ? And why should his Epistles be preserved as a portion of the New Testament

bequeathed to the universal Church by its great Head? We can easily understand why the Gospels which tell us of the commands of our Saviour, of all His wondrous works of mercy upon earth, why these Gospels penned by His own followers should be His Testament; but St. Paul was no follower of our Lord upon earth, he was a persecutor of the Christian Church. How, then, can he speak or write with authority from the Lord Jesus whom he persecuted?

In accepting a revelation as from God, we have to consider, firstly, whether the prophet speaks or bears witness of himself. Even our Lord Himself would not shrink from this test, for it is the test of God Himself. We read it in Deut. xviii. 18: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and I will put My words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I have commanded him; but the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?"

"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him."

We read in the fifth chapter of St. John's Gospel that our Saviour accepted this test as regards Himself. He says in the thirty-first verse: "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. There is

Another that beareth witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesseth of Me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth, but I receive not witness from man; but these things I say that ye might be saved. . . . But I have greater witness than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me."

Let any one read the twenty-third and twenty-fourth chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel, and then read the account of the Siege of Jerusalem as given by Josephus and Tacitus, and there can be little doubt but he will confess that the test as to whether our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ spoke presumptuously, or spoke the words of truth, has been answered by most unwilling witnesses. Never was any prophecy more fully vindicated as true. Will St. Paul stand this test? We find in the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles that a devout disciple at Damascus received a Divine revelation bidding him go to a certain place in search of a certain young man "called Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth." Ananias went, and found that the word of the Lord was fulfilled in every respect. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles records the many miracles performed by St. Paul, his labours, and the great things he suffered for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Acts of the Apostles we read the words spoken by the Apostles before Jewish Sanhedrims and heathen rulers. The writer of the Acts bears witness to the works of St. Paul, and in the Epistles we hear the voice of the Apostle himself when inspired by

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the Holy Ghost to record His messages to the Church.

What was the Church in the days of St. Paul? We shall find an answer to this question as we follow the footsteps of the Apostle, and shall also perceive that the words he was inspired to write for our learning were no presumptuous words proceeding from his own heart, but were by the inspiration of the Eternal Spirit of Truth and Holiness.

The first account of the early life of St. Paul is in Acts xxii. 3, where the Apostle, addressing his own countrymen, says:—

“I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers.”

In Acts v. we read something concerning this Gamaliel, at whose feet Saul of Tarsus sat as a disciple. We read that after the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost descended visibly, and so many signs and miracles were performed by the Apostles, the Jewish Sanhedrim, or Great Council, which had condemned our Saviour to death, was “grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead.” They hoped to have crushed out the name of Jesus as Christ, when He was crucified, but found that where, during His last days upon earth, five hundred disciples only had followed Him, five thousand had been since His crucifixion converted by the Holy Ghost to faith in His name; and fresh converts were daily added to the Church. Even the Levites, kindred of Aaron, heard of the conversion

of some of their order, and we may be sure there was great excitement in priestly circles at Jerusalem. This excitement culminated, however, when the prison refused to retain the Apostolic prisoners. In Acts v. 23 we read: "When the officers came and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors, but when we had opened, we found no man within."

The Apostles had not departed from the city, they still taught in the temple, but they were once more brought up before the Council, and the measure of their punishment debated. We do not find that Gamaliel, the teacher of St. Paul, was present in the session of the Council which condemned our Saviour to death, but we find now that he is enabled to save the Apostles from death, and for future labours with his own pupils (see Acts v. 34 to end of chapter).

CHAPTER II

DAMASCUS—CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

THE city of Damascus is one of the most ancient cities in the world ; it still remains a large and populous city, governed by the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abram, whose steward, Eliezer, was a native of Damascus (Genesis xv. and xxiv.). There are few lovers of the beauties of nature who can read the accounts given by travellers of this lovely city without longing to visit it. Naaman, the captain of the King of Syria's host, said proudly of his native city : " Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel ? "

And it is narrated of the Arabian legislator Mahomet, that when a young man he was travelling upon the eastern slope of Lebanon, and, looking down upon the plain below, saw the lovely city of Damascus beneath him. He saw the two rivers, Abana and Pharpar, whose streams are carried by numerous canals through fields and gardens, which bloom with a perpetual wealth of fragrant flowers and refreshing fruit. The poor camel-driver hesitated and lingered. Life in such a scene would be a life of ease, and calm, restful enjoyment ; but the Spirit within was stronger. " There is but one true Paradise—the heavenly, and that is the one I desire," he said, and, thus speaking, turned away from the beautiful scene,

and returned to his own home amid the arid, riverless wastes of Arabia, where the one fertile portion is called Happy, and every oasis is a perpetual source of thanksgiving. It is impossible to say with certainty by what route St. Paul travelled to Damascus. It is about 150 miles north-east of Jerusalem, at the base of the lofty range of Lebanon. When the young Saul first entered upon the sunny, fragrant plain which surrounds the ancient city he was nerved with a firm faith in the holiness and righteousness of the commission with which he was charged. He was a true soldier of God, or, to use his own words in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, "Beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it." Nay, in after years, when writing to the Church at Corinth, he affirms that he was not meet to be called an apostle, "Because I persecuted the Church of God." The remembrance of this time never left the Apostle to the last day of his life, although he acknowledges that he obtained mercy because he did it "ignorantly in unbelief." What, then, led to an entire change in the life of this ardent, zealous Pharisee, this Hebrew of the Hebrews, to whom the "name of Jesus of Nazareth" was a name to be uttered but with execration and abhorrence? Was it simply that the persecutor was caught in a sudden thunderstorm, and was so completely unnerved by its effect that he dared not execute his commission? No! This explanation will never do. Let us read the account of his own conversion which the Apostle gave to King Herod Agrippa many long years afterwards. I shall in this instance quote from the Revised Version, partly to

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silence any caviller, and also because it is rather fuller. In the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts, when the Apostle is narrating his persecution of the Christians to the Jewish King, he says in the eleventh verse:—

“And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities. Whereupon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad.¹ And I said, Who art Thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen Me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified.”

Well might the Apostle say, “Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” The thunderstorm which can hold such a conversation must be a very miraculous one.

¹ Goad or prick with which cattle were driven.

It is very evident from the account given in the ninth chapter of Acts, as well as in the twenty-second chapter, that those who accompanied the Apostle were conscious of some strange apparition. They saw the Light but did not hear the words, or, as the other account says, "They heard the voice, but saw no man."

Some unusual light was seen, some voice heard, but the words spoken were understood by no one but the Apostle, who was thus called by his Lord ; and from his own lips we learn that the voice spoke in Hebrew.

Those who were with St. Paul may have been Romans, Greeks, or Syrians, but even among the Jews, pure Hebrew was at that time understood but by learned men like St. Paul, we are told. We may be very certain, however, that there was a real message delivered to the Apostle at that time. No common thunderstorm can explain the narrative as given by St. Paul himself. No, we must take it for what it was—a conversion from darkness to light. How many conversions happen every day? How many sinners are passing lightly on their way, ignorantly calling evil good, and good evil, when they are smitten down—not, indeed, as was the great Apostle ; yet, even in these days, how many a sinner has been aroused to hear the voice of the Lord, "Why persecutest thou Me?" and when the awakened soul cries out, "Who art Thou, Lord?" the answer is clear and unmistakable: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

We persecute our Lord, it may be, in scoffing at His Holy Word, in setting aside His commandments, in refusing succour to His suffering members—the

poor and lonely suffering souls of earth. We persecute our Lord in refusing obedience to His Holy Spirit, whose voice speaks softly through the storms of our seething passions. In how many ways do we crucify our Lord afresh, and put Him to an open shame, until we are aroused by His appearance, and are convinced that it is hard, nay, impossible, "to kick against the pricks"! This is the testimony of all ages. Conversion is a reality. It is a revelation of God Himself to the soul, and is of daily occurrence in all parts of the world, although in St. Paul's case the circumstances were quite unique.

When studying the conversion of St. Paul we can but receive instruction from noting the effect of the real prophetic, Divine vision upon the mortal frame. While others are aware of some strange appearance it is to the sacred seer alone that "the heavens are opened"—the Unseen by mortals revealed. The Divine voice may be heard by the friends of the prophet, or by the multitude, but to the sacred prophet alone is this message clearly given. Thus, when the prophet Ezekiel saw his first great vision, and heard the Divine voice, he "sat seven days astonished" among the captives (chapter iii. verse 15). And when Daniel saw the great vision he describes in the tenth chapter, he says: "And I Daniel alone saw the vision; for the men that were with me saw not the vision, but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me, for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength."

When St. John saw the vision of our Saviour in the Isle of Patmos, he says :—

“And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead” (Rev. i. 17).

In all these cases the sacred seer did not seek the vision. Ezekiel was praying by the river side; Daniel was with his companions also by the river side, when he was smitten down; St. John was in the sacred enjoyment of the Lord's day; and St. Paul was among a company of travellers approaching a large city, when the Lord appeared unto him. There was no seeking for any special spiritual manifestation, but a simple reverent fulfilment of the usual duty, in the usual time and place, when a revelation was made which changed the whole course of his life. What a change was that in Saul of Tarsus! No longer a fiery, imperious zealot, but blinded, humbled, and feeling for the first time in his life a sense of ignorance, and of utter helplessness, he is led by the hand into the city of Damascus; there he waits for three days seeking no help, for did not the Lord Jesus, who met him by the way, promise that if he went into the city it should be told him “what he must do”?

Thus, having been brought within the influence of that Spirit of God which is salvation, you might as well expect him to disbelieve in his own existence, as expect him to be disobedient to the heavenly vision. He sat like Ezekiel and Daniel, “astonished.” There was in Damascus an old disciple named Ananias, of whom St. Paul said afterwards that he was a “devout man, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there.” I have wondered sometimes whether Ananias had been converted to

Christianity by our Saviour Himself ; he may have been at one of those feasts at Jerusalem, which our Saviour also attended, when we know that "many believed on Him." Every pious Jew strove to give personal attendance at Jerusalem during, at least, one of the three obligatory yearly festivals, and Damascus was, comparatively, at so short a distance from Jerusalem that I can but think it very likely, since he is called "an old disciple," and all the events narrated of him seem to tell of a disciplined, experienced Christian.

Thus he seems to feel no tremor in the presence of his Lord ; this was evidently no unusual appearance to him ; and when he was told to "Go into the street called Straight, and there visit Saul of Tarsus," he answers at once that he knows the man, and has heard of him, but as a persecutor. There is another point which strikes me in connection with Ananias ; he says that he has heard that Saul of Tarsus hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that "call on Thy name."

This seems to me to prove that, even though Ananias may have been converted by our Saviour, he must have been in Jerusalem since then.

Our Lord in His last discourse said clearly : "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name ; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Ananias knew already that Saul of Tarsus, the devout Pharisee, was a persecutor of those who called on the name of Jesus, yet he was not disobedient to his Lord, even though obedience might seem to entail certain death. He went to the street called Straight, and, approaching the blinded persecutor, laid his hands upon him and said : "Brother

Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith, and was baptized." What a marvellous change in the whole life of Saul had been effected in but one week. He had received the Holy Ghost, and as Archbishop Leighton says: "There is a secret but very powerful virtue in a word, or look, or touch of this Spirit upon the soul; by which it is forced, not with a harsh, but a pleasing violence, and cannot choose but follow it. Not unlike the touch of Elijah's mantle upon Elisha. How easily did the disciples forsake their callings and their dwellings to follow Christ!"

Yes, but we must be well assured it is Christ we follow, for, as He warned us Himself (Matt. xxii.): "Many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many."

How, then, can we know our Lord, that we may receive Him when He shall appear? How can we distinguish between Satan who, taking to himself the appearance of an angel of light, still deceives so many, and the real living Christ, the Saviour of the world? St. Paul's conversion is the key to all such cases. St. Paul had prepared himself by careful, reverent study of his own religion; he had been no idle, careless student; the Old Testament was so familiar to him that it needed but the light from Heaven to show him that the God he loved so well and had so faithfully worshipped had indeed revealed Himself in these latter days by His Son. When the two disciples walked to Emmaus they mourned

over the overthrow of their hopes ; they had trusted that the ancient prophecies were to be fulfilled, and that their crucified Master was indeed "He that should have redeemed Israel" ; and when they were joined by their risen Saviour, how did He comfort them ? simply by "expounding to them out of the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." They were still to reverence the old law, but now that the veil of flesh was rent they were to adore their risen Lord, who had revealed Himself as He had promised that He would do. Satan ever tempts us to disobey the commandments of God. False Christs set themselves up above the law of God. Our Saviour Himself, when tempted by Satan in His days of humiliation, set us an example as to the plan we must adopt to defeat the adversary. We must appeal to the known law of God, to His commandments.

This sketch of St. Paul's life was written during the year 1879. The writer, when meditating upon the true "Word of the Lord," as distinguished from the counterfeits of Satan, was vividly impressed by the following circumstance, narrated in the journals of the time. An unfortunate man in America, tempted by the sinful assaults of Satan, murdered his own young child in sacrifice, or rather, I should say, he affirmed that the Word of the Lord had commanded him to do so, and promised that the child should be raised to life in three days.

It is a sad, wretched, yet true history : father and mother alike, having set up their own ignorant wills in opposition to the truth, were given up to their own devices, we must suppose, for if they had learned the very first alphabet of Christianity they could have

answered the Tempter of souls, as our Lord answered him in the desert, with the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, and they would have said : " It is written, Thou shalt do no murder : and it is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

How many self-deceivers have given themselves up to the seductions of Satan. How many have supposed themselves prophets, and supereminent saints, who were, alas, but self-idolaters. History abounds with the record of fanatics, and their victims, whose delusions form sad, sorrowful beacons to warn every Christian from shipwreck on the fatal shores.

This has been a very long digression from the history of St. Paul, and digressions in history ought to be avoided if possible, so I return to my study.

After his baptism, St. Paul at once took up his position as a Christian. We can easily imagine that, during those three days of blindness to all outer events, the light within had shone upon the stores of sacred knowledge which the young Pharisee had accumulated, and in that time the revelation of Christ to the soul had been progressing with Divine power. I can easily imagine that the great Apostle could never tell what he passed through during these three days which preceded his baptism. Whether he was in the body or out of the body he could not tell, but Christ was formed in his soul the only Pole-star of his life.

We are told in Acts ix. 19, 20, that immediately after his baptism and recovery of sight, " and when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which

were at Damascus, and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God."

No wonder there was a tumult in the city, and an execution of magisterial authority. Here was a young man sent with commission from the authorities at Jerusalem to those at Damascus, authorising them to silence the teachers of Christianity, yet the ambassador charged with the despatches not only fails to deliver them himself, but actually takes up his position as an eloquent teacher of the very doctrines he came to suppress.

"And after many days were fulfilled the Jews took counsel to kill him ; but their lying in wait was known of Saul ; and they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down the wall in a basket."

We know from 2 Corinthians xi. that government authority sanctioned this, for St. Paul says :—

"In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, kept the city of the Damascenes desirous to apprehend me ; but through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands."

Driven from Damascus by persecution, the Apostle took refuge in Arabia. We can never certainly know whether this flight to Arabia preceded his preaching in the Damascene synagogues or not, but we do know that, after remaining some time in Arabia, he returned to Damascus and preached there, returning at length to Jerusalem after an absence of three years. We learn this from Galatians i., where the Apostle says :—

"But when it pleased God, who separated me

from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me, but I went into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days, but other of the Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother."

We have followed the Apostle now through the most important event of his life. He has been admitted into the Church of Christ, which he persecuted. He has preached the Gospel of Christ at Damascus, and most probably in Arabia also, and now he has returned to Jerusalem, the scene of his early studies, no longer to sit at the feet of Gamaliel, no longer to enter into the counsels of the high priests, and be entrusted with priestly commissions, but he has returned to the home of a poor Galilean peasant, with whom but three years ago he would have deemed it contamination to associate. He has come to the house of St. Peter, the loving companion of the martyred Stephen, and he abode with him fifteen days.

CHAPTER III

ST. PAUL'S VISIT TO ST. PETER

IN reading any history, we have great need to realise vividly the value of time. Three years' absence from Jerusalem. What had happened during that time in the Christian Church? In the three years which preceded the writing of this history, the map of Europe had been changed, both politically, and for the Christian Church, by the severance of Servia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro from the Ottoman empire, while other changes have been taking place in Asia, Africa, and elsewhere. Devoted servants of Christ have passed to their rest, and while fresh fields for missionary labours have been opened, Satan has not been idle in striving to seize upon the reins of government, and to gain power to compel men to worship the beast, and all beastly appetites, without any restraint from Christianity.

We acknowledge that all Holy Scripture is given for our learning; and we pray earnestly to believe that our heavenly Father knoweth what is best for us; yet there are few Christians, I imagine, who do not wish, nay, try to know more of the lives of the apostles. It is possible, nay, we must believe that there may be some good reason why the Holy Ghost has recorded so little, yet who does not long to know as much of St. Peter, or St. John, as we do of St. Paul? Of St. Andrew, the first missionary,

we know so little, yet at the end of three years after St. Paul's conversion, most of the Apostles had left Jerusalem ; the brethren alone remained, with two or three of the Apostles. That change, which is the true badge of the Christian, had most certainly taken place in St. Peter, for how otherwise could he have received into his house the persecutor of his dearest friends, Saul of Tarsus, who had assisted those who stoned the saintly Stephen to death. Surely the martyr's prayer had been heard, " Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

We wonder at the grace given to the saint who could thus pray in his death agony. It is equally hard for the everyday Christian, nay for any one without Divine help, to imitate St. Peter, who, for more than a fortnight, received as his guest Saul of Tarsus. If we look through the Book of Acts, we shall find that nothing is told us of St. Peter, which has not some reference to a doctrine which must be enforced, such as "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common, or unclean" (Acts x. 15). The whole conversion of Cornelius is full of meaning, as regards the position of Gentile converts. A few of the miracles performed by St. Peter are recorded, and a few of his travels, but if he had not left behind him that sacred Epistle to the Churches in Western Asia we should have known but little of him. His Lord loved and trusted him, and so we may be sure that the Epistle gives us a far truer picture of the saint than any history, even though he had had so loving and faithful a friend as St. Paul had, in St. Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles. The wonderful effects of the Day of Pentecost still brooded over the Church. None of

the Apostles had returned to Galilee, apparently, although there had been great persecution and many trials. The command of their Lord was imperative : "Go ye into all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Thus, although St. James, the relative of our Lord, remained at Jerusalem to receive all fresh comers, and preside over the Church in that city, the rest of the Apostles had gone boldly forth, to preach and baptize, to found Churches, and carry the glad tidings of the Gospel everywhere. It is possible, nay highly probable, that St. John, to whom the care of the Virgin mother had been entrusted from the Cross, may, during this time, have written at least a part of his Gospel. St. Matthew may also have written his ; we do not know, there is no certain knowledge on the subject. The mere writing of the Gospel, while under the direction of the Holy Ghost, could have been easily accomplished during the Pentecostal week, and copies could have been, and may have been, transcribed afterwards. The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, guided the Apostles in writing the Gospels ; they knew they wrote the Truth, this was all they cared for, since their lives were now completely changed—they lived but to spread abroad the truth of the Gospel. Thus was it with St. Paul. His old life had passed away, and he had become a new creature, even before he returned to Jerusalem and found the welcome of true Christian brotherhood in the house of the lowly Galilean fisherman, St. Peter.

This long digression concluded, we return to the recorded history of the Apostles in Acts ix. 28–30 : "And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians ; but they

went about to slay him, which, when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus."

This is the reason given in the Acts of the Apostles for the departure of St. Paul from Jerusalem and his return to his native city, Tarsus. Yet we very often find that there are, as in this case, two true reasons for the same event. There is the outer one known to all the world, and there is the inner one, known only to the individual himself—that reason which induces the Christian to undertake some duty, or to depart from some post which is known but to himself and to his God. Thus we find that the disciples at Jerusalem were at first afraid to receive the returned persecutor. They feared that he came as a spy, until Barnabas, an old fellow-pupil of St. Paul under Gamaliel, took him and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord on the way, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

Thus, when persecution against the eloquent disputer against the Grecians was stirred up, the Apostles desired him to seek safety by retiring to his native city. This was the outer reason, the inner one is given by St. Paul himself in Acts xxii. 17.

"And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance ; and I saw Him, saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them

that believed on Thee ; and when the blood of Thy martyr, Stephen, was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

“ And He said unto me, Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” This was the consecration of St. Paul: he had been called to follow his Lord upon the plain near Damascus, and having for three years proved obedient and faithful, he now receives his Apostolic Commission directly from the mouth of His Lord, in the Temple, where Simeon had sung his *Nunc Dimittis*, because he had seen with his eyes the “ Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel.”

Thus we have found from the Apostle himself that the inner reason which determined his departure from Jerusalem, was not that he feared the opposition roused against him, but because of his vision in the Temple ; his duty was now clear, and he at once returned to his old home.

Tarsus, the native city of St. Paul, was one of the most ancient cities in the world. It is thus described by Xenophon, who passed through, with the army of ten thousand Greeks, whose campaign he has recorded in his history of the expedition of the younger Cyrus against his brother, 400 years before the birth of our Saviour.

“ Hence he descended into a large and beautiful plain, well watered and abounding with all kinds of trees, as well as vine ; it also produced great quantities of sesame, panic, millet, wheat, and barley. A chain of hills, stony and high, encompasses it on all sides from sea to sea. Descending through this plain, he proceeded in four days’ march a distance of

twenty-five parasangs to Tarsus, a large and opulent city of Cilicia. Here was the palace of Syennesis, the king of the Cilicians ; and through the midst of the city runs a river called the Cydnus, the breadth of which is two plethra. Here Cyrus and his army remained twenty days." Tarsus still retains its ancient name as Tarsous, and has a population of some 20,000 inhabitants, but its old glory has departed, the palaces and forums, the libraries and public buildings which existed in the days of St. Paul now lie in ruins upon the plain, but the river Cydnus still runs through the city to the sea, as it did when Xenophon visited it, or as when Alexander the Great, bathing in its waters, received that chill which almost cost him his life. In the days of St. Paul, Tarsus vied with Athens and Alexandria in the splendour of its buildings and the learning of its schools. Its population was largely Greek, but Syria, Egypt, and Palestine had constant commercial intercourse with its citizens, and the coins of all nations are still found by explorers among the ruins. Cilicia became subject to Rome under Pompey, when the Cilician pirates were the terror of the whole civilised world. Eighteen hundred years ago the claims of Tarsus to respect were well known and acknowledged, for a prompt response was made to the appeal of its greatest citizen, when he said proudly, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city."

Returned to his old home in Tarsus, St. Paul quietly laboured for nearly fourteen years ; we have no record of the result of these labours. Yet a few expressions in the Epistles seem to point out (as Dr. Paley suggests) that these years were not idle

years as regards Christian labour. Thus in 2 Cor. xi. 25, St. Paul says that he had suffered shipwreck three times and had been "a day and a night in the deep." This was written before his last voyage when he was shipwrecked at Malta, so that we must take for granted these years were spent in earnest labours, labours as arduous as were those which are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

The Epistle to the Galatians seems to imply a long and loving acquaintance with that Church, yet in the Acts of the Apostles we read of but short journeys in company with Barnabas. He who could write, "A necessity is laid upon me, that I preach the gospel," and "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel," was not likely to have been idle during the fourteen years which succeeded his vision, and consecration in the Temple at Jerusalem.

CHAPTER IV

CHURCH AT ANTIOCH

IN Galatians i. St. Paul says that he came at this time into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Syria is a very large term ; it included of necessity the whole valley of the Orontes, with a far wider circle approaching the Euphrates. In Syria, Palmyra rose in stately grandeur. The stately cities beyond Jordan, whose ruins simply confound the travellers by their number and their magnificence, the Laodiceas, the cities which we now call Aleppo, Tripoli, Beyrout, together with the ancient Hamath, and the more modern Antioch, all these were open to the Apostle, and are included in his own words, "Syria and Cilicia."

We have certain proof that at a very early period there were large and flourishing Churches in Syria. The learned research of Professor Ramsay leaves no doubt that the Epistle to the Galatians included the Churches of Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, &c., since at that time those cities were included in the Roman province of Galatia.

The next notice of St. Paul in the Acts of the Apostles is in the latter part of Acts xi., when we find that about thirteen years after he had left Jerusalem, his old friend Barnabas, the Christian Levite from Cyprus, who had sold all his property, and laid its gains at the Apostle's feet—Barnabas, the

son of Consolation, as the Apostles called him, or as he is described in the Acts: "A good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith"—Barnabas was sent by the Apostles to Antioch, and found the Church there in a very flourishing condition. He went to Tarsus, "for to see Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch."

There Barnabas and Saul ministered to the Church for nearly one year, and during that time the old barrier between the children of Abraham and the outside world was for ever broken down, for a new name was given to the children of God. Hitherto the Jews had claimed this title to the exclusion of all others. The Christians themselves, who were principally Jews, had distinguished each other by the endearing name of brethren and believers, but at Antioch, Greeks and Syrians were members of the enlarging Church, and to them this name implied no separation from heathendom; they therefore took a new name which was adopted at once by the whole Church, as by inspiration: "Christians"—believers in Christ, Christ's own, belonging to Christ. Could any name have been more appropriate? Little did the persecuted Christians of those days think that the time would come, has come, when there is scarcely one portion of the world where that name is not known, where Christ is not in some degree revered. The old idol temples have crumbled into the dust, and we Christians, though we still linger, and still long for a wider, a more perfect kingdom of Christ, still as of old the words which the great Apostle wrote to the Church at Ephesus ring in our ears: "For this cause I bow my knee unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of

whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."

After remaining one year at Antioch, St. Paul, with Barnabas and (as we learn from Galatians ii.) Titus, a young Greek convert of St. Paul's whom he had adopted as his son, returned to Jerusalem, they went to carry a contribution of money from the rich Antiochian Church to the poor at Jerusalem, in order to assist them in the famine which had been provisioned by some Christians, but which did not actually occur until about three years afterwards. That the famine did occur, we hear from the heathen and Jewish histories. Once more we pause, leaving St. Paul at Jerusalem, no longer an untried convert, one who was himself tormented by the reproachful memories of his youthful mistaken zeal, before whose eyes the martyr Stephen was ever present as a reproachful accuser. No! Fourteen years of faithful labouring for his Lord, fourteen years of experience in the discipline of his Lord, fourteen years' experience of the mercy of his Lord, had given the Apostle a full assurance that his sin was forgiven, or, to use his own expression, he had "obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."

The account of the journey of Saints Barnabas, Paul, and Titus to Jerusalem is given in the last

verses of Acts xi., as well as in the first verses of Galatians ii.

During these fourteen years through which St. Paul had been absent from Jerusalem, great changes had taken place in the government. Tiberius was dead; his death had been long looked for, since he was old, and the world was weary of his tyranny and the plots and suspicions which filled the court and the whole empire. The successor of Tiberius was Caius Caligula, his grandson, who, during the last years of his grandfather's life, had been on terms of the closest friendship with Herod Agrippa, the brother of that Herodias who murdered St. John the Baptist. When Herodias and her husband received the just punishment of their crimes, and were banished, by order of Caligula, to Lyons, in Gaul, the Tetrarchies of Galilee and of Peræa were bestowed upon his old friend, Herod Agrippa. Caligula reigned rather more than three years. Upon his death Claudius succeeded to the imperial throne. Herod Agrippa had spent many years in Rome; he had been educated there, and was a friend of the new emperor, as he had been of the old. Claudius not only confirmed him in the Tetrarchy he had received, but gave him permission to style himself king, wear a diadem, and added to his government Judæa and Samaria. The Herods, descendants of Herod the Great, were, through his wife Mariamne, descended from the long line of Aaronic high priests. Thus, when St. Paul returned to Jerusalem, he found it under a government far more truly national than it had been for many years. Herod Agrippa was a prodigal in his younger days. When he became king he was lavish in his expenditure upon all

public works. He beautified Cæsarea, which Herod the Great had built, but the one principal work, upon which all his energies were directed, was the fortification of Jerusalem. He had been imprisoned under Tiberius, he had seen Caligula assassinated, the changes of this world were well known to him ; it is just possible that he may have aimed at restoring the ancient glories of the house of David and of Solomon. We believe that it was in order to curry favour with the Jewish priesthood that he assented to that persecution of the Christians which took place at this time. The account is given in Acts xii. We are told :—

“Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church, and he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword ; and because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also.”

We know well that St. Peter was saved by special Divine interposition, and we know also how soon retribution followed the persecutor, who shed the blood of saints from no mistaken zeal, but as a stepping-stone for his own self-exaltation. The account of Herod's death is given in the last verses of Acts xii.

Josephus, who as a Jew gives a rather favourable picture of Herod's later life, describes his death thus :—

Now, when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judæa, he came to the city of Cæsarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower, and there he exhibited shows in honour of Cæsar. Upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated to make vows for his safety, at which

festival a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons and such as were of dignity through his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning: at which time the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to cast a horror over those that looked intently upon him; and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place and another from another, (though not for his good) that he was a god. And they added: "Be thou merciful unto us, for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature. Upon this the king did neither rebuke them nor reject their impious flattery." . . . "He departed this life, being in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and the seventh year of his reign: for he reigned four years under Caius Caligula, three of them were over Philip's Tetrarchy only, and in the fourth he had that of Herod added to it, and he reigned besides those three years under the reign of Claudius Cæsar, in which time he reigned over the forementioned countries, and also had Judæa added to them, as also Samaria and Cæsarea. The revenues that he received out of them were very great, no less than twelve million of drachmæ. Yet did he borrow great sums from others, for he was so very liberal that his expenses exceeded his income, and his generosity was boundless."

When Herod Agrippa I. died, his eldest son was but seventeen years of age, and being considered

too young to govern so wide a territory, was retained a little longer under pupilage by Claudius, and once more Judæa was governed by Roman Procurators.

The latter verses of Acts xii. narrate the history of Herod's death. The concluding verse tells us that—

“Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.” We learn from Colossians iv. 10 that this John Mark was a nephew of Barnabas—his sister's son.

When Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch, they found it still at peace, and the Church still flourishing. A list of those spiritual teachers who were endowed with the gift of prophecy is given in Acts xiii. 1, and we thus perceive that there was no lack of learned and competent ministers in the Church, since two of those mentioned had been fellow-pupils with SS. Paul and Barnabas under Gamaliel.

I suppose it must have been shortly after the return of the Apostles from Jerusalem that a solemn fast was held by the elders of the Church, during which a Divine commission was given to SS. Paul and Barnabas, for it is recorded: “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”

The two Apostles thus commissioned at once departed for the work to which they were appointed. Cyprus, the native home of Barnabas, was the first scene of their labours, and it may be well to pause here, at the commencement of St. Paul's missionary

labours as recorded in the Acts, in order that we may consider the position of the Jews in the great Roman empire, which extended from the wave-beaten shores of Britain to the ancient rivers Euphrates and the Nile.

CHAPTER V

EDICTS GRANTED TO THE JEWS—PRIVILEGES SECURED TO THEM BY ROMAN EMPERORS AND SENATES

FROM both Jewish and heathen sources, we learn that even as early as the days of Julius Cæsar, the Jews were very numerous in every part of the Roman empire.

In Egypt, they had large and wealthy colonies, and not merely synagogues where they might meet for mutual exhortation and united prayer with study of the Sacred Law, but for many years they had had a temple where descendants of Aaron offered sacrifice, and the regular temple service was performed. In Asia Minor they were a very large body. In the tenth chapter of his fourteenth book, and in the sixth chapter of his sixteenth book, Josephus has preserved copies of those edicts granted by the Syro-Macedonian monarchs, and also by their Roman conquerors, to the Jewish nation. Charters of religious freedom, in fact, granted, it is true, often in contemptuous terms as a concession to their superstitions. A few examples will prove this. Thus in the fourteenth book, tenth chapter:—

“When Artemon was in Prytanis on the first day of the month lunar, Dolabella, imperator to the senate and magistrates, and people of the Ephesians, sendeth greeting. Alexander, the son of Theodorus, the ambassador of Hyrcanus, the son of Alexander

the high priest, and ethnarch of the Jews, appeared before me to show that his countrymen could not go into their armies, because they were not allowed to bear arms or to travel on the Sabbath day, nor there to procure themselves those sorts of food which they have been used to eat from the time of their forefathers. I do, therefore, grant them a freedom from going into the army, as the former prefects have done; and permit them to use the customs of their forefathers in assembling together for sacred purposes, as their law requires, and for collecting oblations necessary for sacrifice, and my will is that you write this to the several cities under your jurisdiction."

Other edicts copied by Josephus prove that the privileges which the Jews wrung from their conquerors with unswerving obstinacy, or, rather, unwavering fidelity, were chiefly connected with abstinence from all labour on the Sabbath, as well as permission to absent themselves from all heathen religious rites. One from Julius Cæsar to the magistrates of the Cyclades gives the same picture of Jewish customs.

"Julius Cæsar Prætor (Consul) of Rome, to the Magistrates, Senate, and people of the Parians, sendeth greeting. The Jews of Delos, and some other Jews that sojourn there, in the presence of your ambassadors, signified to us, that by a decree of yours, you forbid them to make use of the customs of their forefathers, and their way of sacred worship. Now it does not please me that such decrees should be made against our friends and confederates, whereby they are forbidden to live according to their own customs, or to bring in con-

tributions for common suppers and holy festivals, while they are not forbidden to do so even at Rome itself. . . .

"It will be, therefore, good for you that, if you have made any decree against these our friends and confederates, to abrogate the same, by reason of their virtue and kind disposition towards us."

The Halicarnassians, the Sardians, the Senates of Pergamus, as well as the Ephesians, granted these essential privileges to the Jews ; thus they were enabled to erect their synagogues, and preserve their treasured law, and thus we perceive how natural it was for St. Paul to find a congregation of his fellow-countrymen assembled for worship on the Sabbath Day in almost every city he passed through. At Salamis, in Cyprus, there seems to have been more than one synagogue, for we find in Acts xiii. 5, "And when they were at Salamis they preached the Word of God in the synagogues."

Paphos, in Cyprus, had long been noted as the headquarters of the worship of Venus, yet even here the Apostles ventured to preach the Gospel. Their mission soon excited so great an interest that the Governor of the country, Sergius Paulus, desired to hear them preach, and, thus hearing, was deeply interested, and needed but the renewing influence of the Holy Ghost to enable him to perceive, and believe the truth. Paphos was, however, the headquarters of one of the most enslaving superstitions of the East, and was rich in all magic arts and illusions. A very celebrated magician was then in the city. He was named Elymas, and was a recreant Jew. Thus, having been false to the first principles of his own holy religion, it is quite possible that he

thought the Apostles were impostors also ; be this as it may, he strove to oppose the teaching of SS. Paul and Barnabas, and to stifle the dawning Faith of the Governor of the Island. What means he employed for this purpose we do not know ; we are simply told : “ But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the Deputy from the faith.” We know nothing of the means Elymas used to subvert the Faith, but we do know the effects of the Divine fervour which he aroused in the heart of St. Paul. This was no case for pity and mistaken gentleness ; the man had blasphemed the Holy Ghost. “ Then Saul (who also is called Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes upon him and said—

“ O full of all subtilty, and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord ? And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.

“ And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness, and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the Deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.”

This incident is the only one recorded of the result of the labours of the Apostles in Cyprus ; they traversed the island, they preached in the synagogues, they converted the Governor to the faith of Christ, and then they sailed away, and, as far as we know, St. Paul never revisited the island. St. Barnabas did revisit his old home at a later period. He had

sold his all, for the love of his Lord, and he found consolation in the conversion of some among his old friends, yet he might not rest there ; he must continue the work appointed him, and leave the care of the infant Church to its latest member, the first magistrate of the place.

Leaving Cyprus, the Apostles sailed to the opposite shores of Ionia, or Asia Minor. They first visited Perga on the sea coast of Pamphylia, and here John Mark, the nephew of St. Barnabas, left them, and returned to Jerusalem. We are not told the reason for his departure, but it is very certain that St. Paul was grieved by it. Some writers have suggested that a real natural fear of the physical toils and dangers to which he would be exposed, as well as the fear of a young convert to face the certain opposition of his own countrymen, induced the nephew to desert his uncle. These writers suppose that the young John Mark dreaded equally the fierce Gentile mountaineers and robbers, through whose country they were now preparing to pass, as well as the dangerous bigotry of the wealthy Jews whom the Apostles intended to confront in the cities of Phrygia and Pisidia. We know nothing ; we only know that when they came to Perga, in Pamphylia, John Mark departed from them and returned to Jerusalem.

Sir Charles Fellowes, in describing the scenery around Perga, says : " About half-an-hour before I reached the plain at the foot of this mountain, a view burst upon me through the cliffs so far exceeding the usual beauty of Nature, as to seem like the work of magic. I looked down upon the rich and verdant plain of summer, with the blue sea in the distance,

and on either side, like outstretched arms, ranges of mountains, bounding the Bay of Pamphylia. . . . The bay is bounded by the continued chain of mountains which rise proudly from the sea. I have never seen mountains so poetically beautiful. I remember seeing something of the same effect in those of Carrara from the Spezzia road, and again in Greece ; and in each case they were, as here, of marble. . . . The mountains forming the western side of the Gulf of Pamphylia rise from the sea, until they are piled up to the height of Mount Climax, whose summit is now capped with snow." Sir C. Fellowes found the ruins here of a splendid but desolate city. Shepherds encamped among the arches of the marble theatre and stadium, where Greeks and Romans had once witnessed the horse races of the stadium, or the dramatic representations, or the gladiatorial combats and shows of the theatre. Now the Ibis, the black and white heron, snipes, ducks, and wild waterfowl flutter fearlessly in the river Cestrus, and thus prove that the old active human life of Perga in Pamphylia has departed.

The first city visited by the Apostles after leaving Perga was Antioch in Pisidia. Nature remains the same for ever. The Apostles may have traversed the same pass in the mountains which Sir C. Fellowes trod. I can almost fancy I see the two travellers ascending the heights from Perga, and looking down upon the lovely plain beneath, and singing praises as they journeyed, "making melody in their hearts" while rejoicing in all the beauty by which they were surrounded, and in His love Who gave it. Antioch in Pisidia, although it may have owed its existence to the same Macedonian founders, was a very different city from the gay, enervating, luxurious Syrian Antioch,

for Antioch in Pisidia was situated in the heart of a wildly mountainous region, whose inhabitants had never been thoroughly subdued by either Greek or Persian, Macedonian or Roman; they paid a slight tribute to the ruling power, and maintained their own customs. Large numbers of Jews had emigrated to Phrygia, as we learn from Josephus, "Antiquities," book 12, ch. 3, sec. 4. Thus, as the boundaries of Phrygia and Pisidia were so slight that Xenophon places Iconium in Phrygia, while Ammianus Marcellinus places it in Pisidia, we can easily understand how it was that St. Paul found a large number of Jews in this mountainous region. We find that SS. Paul and Barnabas, having crossed the mountains which separated Perga from the Pisidian Antioch, waited until the Sabbath Day before entering upon their task. They joined in the usual synagogue service, and then, according to the Jewish custom, the rulers of the synagogue addressed the two distinguished visitors, and invited them, if they had "any word of exhortation for the people, to say on."

St. Paul at once stood up, and in an eloquent discourse proceeded to justify the Eternal Prescience, Sovereignty, and Faithfulness of the God of their fathers. This was the method always adopted by the Apostles when addressing a Jewish audience. St. Stephen before the rulers, St. Peter, as well as St. Paul, first recalled to the memories of their hearers the ancient promises treasured by their nation—promises that from the family of Abraham a descendant of David should be a Prince and a Saviour. Having thus reminded them of the sacred prophecies, he boldly announced their fulfilment, saying, "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise

which was made unto the fathers God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again."

The whole sermon, as given in Acts xiii., abridged though it may be, still enables us to understand the effect it produced. There was no opposition. There was simply the power of the Gospel unto salvation. There seems to have been a remarkable outpouring of the Spirit upon the silent, awe-stricken congregation, who left the synagogue with the words still ringing in their ears: "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets. Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work in your days—a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

There seems to have been a very great interest excited in the city. Not only the Jews, but the Gentiles also besought that the Word might be preached to them on the next Sabbath. In the meantime SS. Paul and Barnabas were followed by reverent disciples who received all the consolations of faith, the Apostles "persuading them to continue in the Grace of God."

"And the next Sabbath came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God; but when the Jews saw the multitude they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said:

"It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles."

Jewish jealousy and Jewish exclusiveness produced

their usual effect. Persecution was stirred up in the city, and the false imputations made, and the false imputations believed, at length expelled the Apostles from Antioch in Pisidia.

“But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came into Iconium.”

The Apostles departed to spread the Gospel of Salvation still further, but the hearts they had rejoiced at Antioch remained quietly at rest. The old occupations were followed, the old neighbourly offices performed, but it is added: “The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost.” Iconium, the next city to which the Apostles went, was a large one on the great highway between Ephesus and the Syrian cities and the great Persian empire beyond. Xenophon passed through it with the 10,000 Greeks under Prince Cyrus. It still exists as Koniech, and amid the ruins of the ancient buildings the Greek Christians have churches, where St. Paul once preached.

At Iconium the Apostles experienced the same treatment they had met with at Antioch. For some time they were permitted to preach without any serious opposition; but when the number of converts became a source of alarm to Jewish exclusiveness and heathen covetousness, their persecution was aroused, and it was but by timely information they were enabled to save themselves by flight from being stoned to death.

From Iconium, the Apostles fled to Lystra and Derbe, two small cities at no very great distance, on the high road which led from Iconium to Cilicia, St. Paul's native province. Here the two Apostles preached the Gospel and converted many to the Faith.

At Derbe or Lystra lived the boy Timotheus, better known to us by his English name of Timothy. We do not know with any certainty when he was converted, but we do know from Acts xvi. 1 that his mother was a Jewess, which believed, while his father was a Greek. The mother of St. Timothy may have been converted during this first visit of St. Paul to Derbe and Lystra. The Church has ever loved to remember the gentle, saintly virtues of the mother and grandmother of St. Timothy, as recorded in 2 Timothy i. 5, where the aged Apostle urges his disciple to perseverance in his Christian course, by reminding him of his ancestry and early privileges: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice." "And I am persuaded that in thee also . . . and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ."

Thus we perceive that, although the mother of Timothy had loved a heathen well enough to marry him, she had never forgotten the holy teaching of the Sacred Law. She and her mother Lois had trained the young child to love and study the Holy Scriptures, and thus the ancient histories of the triumphs of Faith—the ancient sanctities of the Divine Law—were studied, the prophecies of the inspired prophets were reverently searched, and the Psalms of Moses, the man of God, of David the shepherd-king, and of all the inspired priests and Levites of old, were sung beneath the roof of the Greek father, whose sires may have shorn their locks at Delphi, or have offered devout sacrifice in the temple of

Diana at Ephesus. It was at Lystra the great event of the Apostle's journey took place. The miraculous healing of a cripple by the simple word of Faith given to St. Paul so aroused the superstitions of the heathen populace, that they cried out, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men." Barnabas, the Levite, was supposed to be Jupiter, while the eloquent inspired Paul was supposed to be Mercury, and the priests of these deities immediately prepared to offer sacrifices to the celestial visitants, for the idea of an Incarnation of the Deity was no new one to the Greek mind. They simply needed instruction in the nature of the Deity and in His Law. But the Apostles at once proved their faith and loyalty by the way in which they received this proffered homage.

"They rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein. . . . And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them."

There is no record of the time which elapsed between this ovation and the event recorded in the next verse. Was it a week, or a month, or only a day which elapsed between the cry which then rang through the streets of Lystra: "The gods have come down unto us in the likeness of men," and the pitiful truth that St. Paul was stoned in the same place, and was drawn out of the city supposing he had been dead? "Howbeit, as the

disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe."

We cannot tell; we only know that at Jerusalem, upon one bright and joyous Sunday, the Jews rent the air with their shouts, crying "Hosanna!" and "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord"; yet on the following Friday the cry arose, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" So was it with St. Paul and Barnabas; they had not changed, but certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium had arrived at Lystra, and they had persuaded the people to stone Paul.

Thus is it ever. The disciple is not greater than his Lord. Let it be enough for the disciple to be as his Lord. If he "suffer wrongfully," if only his own conscience be clear and he can truly say that he is innocent of the crime laid to his charge, and can steadfastly await the judgment of his Lord, then can he rest in his Lord's comfort. "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good courage, I have overcome the world."

"St. Paul and Barnabas left Lystra for Derbe. There they preached, and from thence they passed through all the cities they had already visited in Pisidia and Pamphylia, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the Faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God."

Thus, by the labours and endurance of these two good soldiers of Christ, was the Christian Church founded in Pisidia and Pamphylia. Once more Perga was visited, but the Apostles did not rest there. They continued their journey to Attalia, and from thence sailed to Antioch in Syria.

Antioch, in Syria, to which the Apostles now returned, was considered the third city in the Roman empire, both for its beauty and commercial importance, Rome, and Alexandria, in Egypt, being its only superiors in these respects. Antioch was built by Seleucus Nicator about 300 B.C., and named after his father, the Macedonian, who received Syria as his share of the conqueror's spoils when Alexander the Great died. There were many Jews in Antioch, and they had there even larger privileges than in other heathen cities, for they had an alabarch, or governor, of their own, we are told. He was exempted from the jurisdiction of the other civil magistrates of the place, and responsible to the sovereign alone, for the behaviour of his countrymen. Antioch itself was situated upon the river Orontes, at a distance of about twenty-five or thirty miles from the sea, in the midst of some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.

The river Orontes, which drains the lofty slopes of the Eastern Lebanon, meanders through the fertile valley of Cœlo-Syria, northwards, to meet the sea. In ancient times the banks of this river were studded with populous cities; for irrigation from so bounteous a river secured the reward of the careful cultivator of the ground; and its deep stream, navigable for vessels of considerable burden, formed a ready means of communication with the sea coast, or with the great cities of the East. The climate is favourable to the growth of corn of various kinds, while the vine, the mulberry, the fig, the peach, and pomegranate, still flourish as they flourished when St. Paul traversed the Syrian plains.

The celebrated shrine of Daphne and oracle of

Apollo were situated in one of the Antiochan villages—that Daphne who was fabled to have been changed into a laurel; and the evergreens which still surround the city call forth the admiration of every traveller by their size and beauty.

Rather more than twenty miles below Antioch, on the Orontes, and about six or seven miles from the sea, stood the ancient city of Seleucia, from which SS. Paul and Barnabas embarked for Cyprus, and which they must have passed on their return, when, as it seems, they sailed up the river at once to Antioch. Colonel Chesney, when employed upon the survey of the River Orontes, with the view of opening it up to commercial enterprise, thus describes the port of Antioch in his report to the Royal Geographical Society—

“The Bay of Antioch is spacious, free from rocks, and well sheltered on every side, with the exception of the south-east, where, in the distant horizon, is seen the lofty island of Cyprus. The anchorage is good, and the water deep, almost to the very beach. . . . To the south as we proceeded was the lofty Mount Casius (Jebel el Akrah), rising 5318 feet above the sea, with its abutments extending to Antioch. To the north the Beilan range, well stocked with forest trees, chiefly oak, walnut, and firs, and in front the broad expanse of the bay, backed by the hills of Antioch, Mount St. Symeon, or Ben Kalisch, covered with myrtle, bay, and arbutus, altogether forming a striking and magnificent panorama. . . .”

North-west by half west is the other horn of the bay, which is formed by Jebel Musa, on the base of which, opening north-west, are the ruins of the well-

known city built by Seleucus Nicator to celebrate his victory over Antigonus ; but it has a much deeper interest to the Christian from being the spot where Paul and Barnabas embarked for Cyprus.

Another writer thus describes the ruins of the port of Seleucia in "Fisher's Views of Syria and the Holy Land": "The scene at present is wild and impressive. A desolate and rocky beach, Mount Casius on the left, a few country barks crossing the Bay of Suadeah to enter the mouth of the Orontes. The two piers of the ancient port are seen projecting into the sea. The ruined tower on the rock was built for its protection, and near this one of the piers ran into the sea constructed of very large stones, some of them twenty feet by six in width and five in depth. They have been fastened together by iron cramps, the remains of which are still to be seen." The bald grey head of the lofty Mount Casius and the sunny clefts in its face must have been a welcome sight to the two Apostles, as they approached the familiar scenes around Antioch ; but we are simply told, that after their arrival in the city, they at once published the results of their mission. "And when they were come and had gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." "And there they abode long time with the disciples."

CHAPTER VI

CONVOCATION OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

WE have now arrived at a very important point in St. Paul's life, nay, in the very life of the Christian Church itself, for we have to consider the convocation of the first Christian council. The circumstances which led to this convocation are narrated in Acts xv. 1-2: "And certain men which came down from Judæa taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about the question."

The whole narrative as given in Acts xv. is very interesting. We find that St. Peter supported Barnabas and Paul in claiming for the Gentile converts immunity from the rites of the Mosaic ceremonial law. St. Peter reminds the council that he admitted the first Gentile converts into the Church by baptism alone, without any subjection to circumcision.

"And God, Which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us ; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck

of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they."

The speech of St. Peter was seconded by the report of the missionaries—SS. Paul and Barnabas—who declared the wonders and the miracles which God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

We may be very sure the matter was thoroughly considered, and the decision was final; it was pronounced by that St. James, who, as a near relative of our Saviour, spoke with the authority which seems to have been accorded to him on that account.

All merely ceremonial rites of the Mosaic ritual were to be abolished in the Church. The Apostle said in conclusion—

"Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God; but that we write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood."

These simple and pre-Mosaic laws were retained as a special guard against certain well-known pollutions of heathen (so-called) religion, where the vilest sins were committed under the pretence of honour to the gods. Classical history abounds with notices of human sacrifices upon the altars of the heathen, and the libations of blood which the inspired Psalmist of the 16th Psalm denounces when he says: "Their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their name into my lips," were very frequently tasted by the sacrificer before they were poured out.

Every sin specially mentioned as a reason for exclusion from the Christian Church was one which was an habitual snare in every heathen city. The first Christian council simply reiterated the Commandments of God, and then threw wide the gates for the admission of the whole Gentile world into the Christian Church.

SS. Paul and Barnabas, delighted with their success, returned to Antioch, accompanied by two eminent elders of the Church at Jerusalem—Silvanus, better known to us as Silas, and also Barsabas, who, as we learn from Acts i. 23, was a disciple of our Saviour, one who had known Him so well, and followed Him so faithfully, that he was chosen with Matthias by the Apostles for selection by lot to fill up the place left vacant among them by Judas Iscariot. Matthias was chosen, but Barsabas was honoured as an elder, and the position he held in the Church is given in Acts xv. 22—

“Then pleased it the Apostles and elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas, surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren.”

We may be very sure the Church at Antioch must have rejoiced in the presence of Judas Barsabas, who had known the Lord Jesus in the flesh, and had accompanied Him in all His ministrations as one of the seventy disciples. Silas may possibly have been one of these also, but of this we are not certain. We are only told that the Christians at Antioch “rejoiced in the consolation” of the epistle they received from the Council at Jerusalem. We read also that Judas Barsabas and Silas exhorted them ;

also that when Barsabas returned to Jerusalem, Silas decided to remain at Antioch. "Paul also, and Barnabas, continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the Word of the Lord with many others also."

St. Paul seems to have remained at Antioch some time upon this occasion, and it was during this stay that he found it necessary to oppose St. Peter, upon the very point on which they had rejoiced to agree at Jerusalem. No! I remember that in Galatians ii., where this difference is recorded, St. Paul does not say that St. Peter desired or compelled the Gentile converts to be circumcised, but he says, "But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation."

This conduct of St. Peter does seem strange, after his advocacy of the claims of the Gentile converts to a free reception into the Church, yet we must remember that we do not know the full particulars of the case. A very wide distinction must be drawn between the two Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. It is true that they were both Apostles, both inspired by the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost; yet we know well that the Holy Spirit always acts upon what He finds. He may, He can renew the whole life, and, as at the Day of Pentecost, descend like cloven tongues of flame, giving fresh gifts, fresh powers to His faithful recipients. Yet, even thus, it

is very evident there was, and ever would be, a wide difference between the simple-hearted Galilean fisherman, whose whole character had been formed under the hands of his Lord in personal teaching, whose whole life had been spent, from boyhood to manhood, in an entire seclusion from heathenism. Judæa was still permitted the free use of her religion ; the Mosaic law was still supreme in all religious matters ; for the Jews had compelled their Roman governors to remove the hated symbols of idolatry from the capital. Thus to St. Peter the outward show, the very minutest trace, of idolatry was hateful. St. Paul, however, had been born at Tarsus ; his early boyhood had been passed among the sights and wonders of the joyous Greek festivals to the so-called gods. Doubtless he passed an image of Mars, of Jupiter, or Venus, every time he went through his native town ; thus, although he was himself "A Hebrew of Hebrews," and hated idolatry as much as St. Peter, yet custom and long association with the Gentiles had taught him, as no real countryman of Judæa could be taught, that "An idol is nothing," and he was himself so accustomed to Gentile customs, that when writing to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. x. 27), he says : " If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go, whatsoever is set before you eat, asking no questions for conscience' sake ; but if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not, for his sake that showed it, and for conscience' sake ; for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

Now, such a case as this would never have suggested itself to the mind of St. Peter. It is true that he had, after having baptized the Roman

centurion, Cornelius, been reproached by Judaising Christians for "eating with men uncircumcised," but he did not eat with them until they had been baptized, and although Cæsarea was truly a heathen city, yet St. Peter remained there but a few days, and we may be sure Cornelius would offer no sacrifice to idols then. Thus it is very possible that when St. Peter came to Antioch he never dreamed that the Gentile converts might perhaps pass out from the Agapæ, or Feasts of Charity, or even the sacred Sacramental Lord's Supper, to some family banquet, where libations would be poured out to Venus or Bacchus, or, perhaps, the remains of some sacrifice offered in the temples would be partaken of by the sacrificers.

Antioch in Syria was noted as the very headquarters of light-hearted brilliant wit; frivolous, licentious, voluptuous idolatry. And yet the chains of those idol temples were not flowery chains; they were, it is true, wreathed with flowers, but they were forged of iron, tempered in blood. It is a great mistake to suppose that heathenism was tolerant; on the contrary, every student of history knows well, that any irreverence to the (so-called) religious customs of a heathen city, was always punished with death. Alcibiades barely escaped death, by exile, when he was supposed to have blasphemed the Eleusinian mysteries, and mutilated the Hermæ, or out door Statues of Mercury.¹ Anaxagoras, Socrates, and others will prove the truth of this often repeated, though often ignored, statement, that Heathenism is cruel.

Thus we perceive that it was almost impossible

¹ Thucydides, book 6.

for St. Peter to associate freely with the Gentiles of Antioch. The Levite Barnabas was also sure to share largely in his feelings ; but to St. Paul, the Roman citizen, yet the very impersonation of the "freeman of Christ," their conduct would seem incomprehensible. He never gave up one privilege which he possessed, but would use it to its full extent. He was a Jew, and would not give up his Jewish birthright ; yet as a Roman citizen he would mingle with his fellow-citizens in all social customs which did not minister to heathenism, but might be the means of salvation to some poor Gentile wanderers. Thus had the bigoted Saul of Tarsus been changed by the Holy Spirit into the Christian St. Paul. It is very instructive to note the effect of the Holy Ghost. We are all too apt to imagine that we can, that we do, direct His operations. Yet if we believe Him indeed to be One with the Father, and with the Son, we believe Him to be Almighty. How often do we plan out a happy, untroubled life, a life of love, and of peace, where discord shall never come, where envy shall never enter ! we imagine that our plans, our projects, will be blessed ; yet the Holy Ghost descends, and the disciple is thrown into the furnace of tribulation, where every treasured comfort is withdrawn, every earthly friend estranged, and the soul is alone in the sacred purifying element—alone, yet not alone, if only he can say with his Saviour, "I am not alone, for the Father is with me."

One verse in 2 St. Peter iii. 15 tells us that this difference between the two great Apostles had no lasting effect. St. Peter calls St. Paul his beloved brother, and recognises the wisdom given to him as well as the danger to which many were exposed

who perverted his half-learned lessons. This difference with St. Peter was not the only one which troubled St. Paul at Antioch upon this occasion, for we find in Acts xv. 36 : "And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark, but Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work ; and the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder one from the other ; and so Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus, and Paul chose Silas and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches." Thus after the Holy Ghost had separated St. Peter from St. Paul, upon a point where each felt himself to be acting in obedience to the Divine monition, this still further trial awaited the Apostle. He could not again trust that John Mark who had already deserted his uncle in Pamphylia ; while St. Barnabas, true to the name given to him by the Apostles in baptism, "The son of consolation," wished his nephew to have another trial, and it is pleasant to know that the loving care of St. Barnabas was rewarded, and that St. Paul acknowledged this, for when writing to the Church at Colossæ some years afterwards he says, Col. iv. 10 : "Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, touching whom ye received commandment, if he come unto you, receive him."

Again, when writing his last Epistle to his own

adopted son Timothy from the prison cell at Rome, he says: "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

This separation from St. Barnabas, and the entry upon a fresh journey with Silas, seems a good pausing point. St. Peter had left Antioch, most probably to labour among those wilds of Pontus, Galatia, and Bithynia, to which his first Epistle is addressed—that Epistle which has been a source of thanksgiving to the universal Church ever since it was penned. Oh that it were more widely spread, that far away among the lonely mountain ranges of the Taurus, and amid the sunny vales and plains of Cappadocia, those sacred words were better known! The passing traveller finds ruined cities, where white marble pillars and broken statues attest their past glories; he bears away rich treasures of sculptured stone with which to adorn the museum of his native land; but who will bear the light of the Eternal Word once more among those hills and valleys? Who will carry on the work of St. Peter and St. Paul?

CHAPTER VII

JOURNEY OF ST. PAUL WITH SILAS, TIMOTHY, AND ST. LUKE

THE Apostolic journey which we are now about to follow was not commenced by a sea voyage. St. Paul did not, as upon his last missionary tour, proceed from Antioch by sea, but, travelling most likely on foot, he and Silas passed north to his native province of Cilicia. Most likely they passed through the celebrated mountain pass known as the Cilician Gates. We do not know whether they visited Tarsus, but most likely they did do so, for it lay directly in their way to the cities of Derbe and Lystra, in Lycaonia. We are simply told, "And he went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra." At Lystra St. Paul was welcomed by the whole Church; and as I have imagined that the mother of Timothy, if not the young man himself, may have been converted on the previous journey of St. Paul, so now we are told that this Timotheus "was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium" (Acts xvi.). Of course this is mere conjecture. Timothy's conversion may have taken place during the Apostle's absence, but at any rate he must have desired to accompany St. Paul, who also desired to have him with him. Here again we come upon an apparent inconsist-

ency in the Apostle's conduct, yet one easy of explanation, and one which cannot be passed over.

St. Paul circumcised the young man Timothy, although he carried with him the decrees of the Council at Jerusalem, and preached everywhere that circumcision was not necessary for Gentile converts. We must remember here the peculiar privileges possessed by the Jews in the principal cities through which St. Paul intended to pass. The ancestors of Timothy on the mother's side were all Jews; thus, if he was circumcised, he would be entitled to claim the privileges granted to Jews in every Gentile city, and would be enabled with St. Paul and Silas to enter into every synagogue upon the Sabbath day. Thus we find that, although to St. Paul circumcision was nothing, and uncircumcision nothing, yet he unhesitatingly circumcised Timothy, in order to enable him to avail himself of the privileges of his mother's family.

Thus, then, the faithful Timothy bade farewell to his old home, his gentle mother, and saintly grandmother, and we may be very sure they rejoiced to see him take up the Cross of Christ, and follow this true soldier wherever he might lead.

We are told as the result of this mission of St. Paul, "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in numbers daily."

The region through which St. Paul, with Silas and Timothy, next preached the Gospel was, we are told, Phrygia and Galatia. A very large extent of country is included in this expression. Galatia was the home of those Celtic tribes or

Gauls who, having in the early years of the Roman Republic sacked Rome, when driven thence threw themselves southward towards the sunny shores of Greece. Repulsed from the Grecian peninsula, they are said to have wandered eastwards, and finally to have established themselves in, and given their own name of Galatia to, that fertile and beautiful country.

Galatia is separated from the Black Sea on the north by the ancient kingdoms of Bithynia and Paphlagonia, while Phrygia and Pisidia bounded it on the south. In Phrygia were the two large towns of Colossæ and Laodicæa, and it seems very natural that St. Paul should, in this journey, have visited these cities. Xenophon passed through Colossæ with Prince Cyrus. He says: "Having crossed the stream, he went forward through Phrygia, one day's march—eight *parasangs*—till he reached Colossæ, a populous city, wealthy, and of considerable magnitude. Here he halted seven days."

Thus we see that Colossæ was a flourishing town 400 years before St. Paul visited it. Xerxes visited Colossæ when he invaded Greece, and built the town of Celenæ in its neighbourhood; but Colossæ is immortalised, not as the city through which Xerxes, or Cyrus and Xenophon passed on their world-famous journeys, but as the home of Philemon, the master of the slave Onesimus, and as the city in which was read first to the assembled church the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians.

We are accustomed to scan, to criticise, or to admire the inspiration of the Holy Ghost in the Sacred Word: yet who can help doing so? Who

does not involuntarily turn to some favourite portion of Holy Writ for consolation or guidance in times of sorrow? It may be in the pages of the beloved Apostle, or in the simple narrative of the converted publican, who so concisely, yet faithfully, records the events he witnessed, the words he heard while following that Lord for Whom he forsook all earthly gain. It may be in the Book of inspired Psalms, or in the rapt prophecies of Isaiah, or the pathetic previsions of Micah the Morasthite, or in that ancient comforter of all stricken souls, the patriarch Job. Thus is it with the Epistle to the Colossians. The Epistles of Holy Writ are for the universal Church, it is true; yet as in the Epistles to the Corinthians, there are certain portions in some which are applicable only to the Church to which the Epistle is addressed. This is not the case with the Epistle to the Colossians. No wonder critics have thought the Apostle had not seen his correspondents. Like the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is but by one or two minute touches that we perceive it had any local reference. It is universal; every word is a word for humanity while humanity exists. The Apostle speaks of himself as of "Paul the aged," and as of being in prison. Every word seems to be filled with that Divine Spirit, whose monitions are most readily received when all earthly comforts fail, and who speaks in every tone of those lofty commanding words.

Several learned divines have questioned whether St. Paul had really visited Colossæ when he wrote the Epistles to Philemon and the Colossian Church. The reasons given are that the Apostle speaks in Col. ii. 1 of the conflict which he endured for them,

"and for them at Laodicæa, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh."

Now, to my mind, this expression is very easily explained, and (always with due deference to superior wisdom) it seems to me almost certain that St. Paul must, in this Phrygian journey, have visited Colossæ; for the city lies on the great ancient highroad to the East from Ephesus, and if, as I and others suppose, he did so, there is ample confirmation in minute particulars of this view. For if we suppose him to have done so, and to have converted Philemon, we can understand his saying, when pleading for the forgiveness of Onesimus, in Philemon, ver. 19, "Howbeit, I do not say how thou owest unto me even thine own self."

Again, we know that Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, was not with St. Paul on this journey through Phrygia, and we find in Col. x. 4: "Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, touching whom you received commandment, if he comes unto you, receive him." Thus it seems clear to me that a previous acquaintance with the Church at Colossæ is shown in the Epistle, while the Apostle rejoices in their added numbers. The Church had grown largely during the years which had elapsed since he visited it. He wrote to Colossæ from his prison-house in Rome during his first imprisonment, and sent it by Tychicus and the returning slave Onesimus, who also bore one to his master, Philemon. Tychicus and Onesimus would have told the Apostle of the rapid growth of the Church, I imagine, and thus he speaks of the conflict he had for those who had not seen his face in the flesh. We learn from Philemon, ver. 22, that the Apostle intended

to visit Colossæ on his release, but we do not know whether he did do so. We only know that we owe to the Church at Colossæ the rich bequest of the Epistle to the Colossians.

And through what scenes has that Epistle passed. We see Tychicus and Onesimus bearing it on to wealthy Colossæ; we see the Church assembled to hear its Epistle read. Then we may imagine one after another of the brethren carefully transcribing the treasured words for his own use. When the neighbouring town of Laodicæa sent a copy of its Epistle to Colossæ, we may be very sure the injunction of the Apostle was obeyed, and a copy was given to Laodicæa, Pergamus, Sardis, Ephesus, Thyatira—all cities at no great distance asked for, and obtained copies. Others were sent to Jerusalem, to Antioch, to Alexandria. Nay, we must stop; yet we perceive a Chrysostom and an Augustine, a Cyprian and a Polycarp. Oh noble army of martyrs, where shall we stay our memories? We see lowly cells, and patient scribes engaged in preserving that sacred Epistle; we see it read aloud in assembled churches, gathered together in dens and caves of the earth. Yet the members of Christ ever gained from it strength for all gentle, loving ministries to the weak and the weary. They gained faith for endurance in every bitter trial and persecution. We see a Bede and a Wickliffe, a Luther, and innumerable hosts of others, translating the sacred words into the spoken language of the people, that they might be within the reach of all.

Heathen emperors and Satan's ministers in all ages have endeavoured to destroy the life-giving Word, but we have seen it arise out of the fires of

every persecution, purified and more powerful than before—for the Holy Spirit will preserve His own.

Let us, then, rejoice in the goodly fellowship who are united with us in love and reverence for the Sacred Word, and while our copies cost us so little to procure, let us remember that it were better for us to have never known or heard the Sacred Word, than, having known it, to disobey its gentle monitions, or fall from the faith once delivered to the Saints.

St. Paul and his party now passed from Phrygia into Mysia, for we read in Acts xvi.: "After they were come into Mysia they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia, came down to Troas."

We know that there were large and flourishing Christian churches in Bithynia at a very early period, and the Christians of Bithynia are specially mentioned among those to whom the first epistle of St. Peter is addressed. Thus it has occurred to me that when St. Paul reached this neighbourhood, St. Peter may have been in Bithynia, and this was the reason why St. Paul was not permitted to go there, since the Apostles never interfered with each other's labours, or as St. Paul himself expresses it, "built upon another man's foundation." This is, however, mere speculation; we know that St. Paul went down to Troas. Troas was a large city built in the Troad, to the south of ancient Troy. When St. Paul was there, it was a populous, busy city, from whence it was possible to reach the coast of Macedonia in about four days. A very important era in the life of the Apostle had arrived when he reached Troas. He himself did not know this; he could never foresee the result of the vision which appeared

to him at Troas ; he had been stayed from preaching where he had intended, and was quietly waiting for direction from his Lord when we are told—

“And a vision appeared to Paul in the night ; there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, ‘Come over into Macedonia and help us.’ ”

As soon as St. Paul had seen this vision, he at once concluded that his Lord had called him to preach the Gospel in Macedonia ; so, without any loss of time, he immediately set sail for Europe, and landing at Neapolis, in South-Eastern Macedonia, he passed from thence, the next day, to Philippi, the capital of the province. Thus was Christianity carried by St. Paul into Europe ; and to that memorable journey the universal Church is indebted for the Epistles to the Corinthians and Thessalonians, that to the Philippians, and the one to the Church at Rome—to say nothing of the example set by the Apostle on that journey, of faithful endurance and patient suffering when persecuted, of undaunted courage in pursuing the labour apportioned him by his Lord, and of all the sweet, holy gentleness of the true servant of Christ.

Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, were all towns at no very great distance from each other in Southern Macedonia. Thessalonica is still a busy town on the Gulf of Salonica. Here ruined triumphal arches still remain to commemorate Augustus and Constantine. Berea also is still a town in Roumelia, known now as Verria, with a population, it is said, of some 15,000 or 20,000. Philippi was, however, the first town in Europe which heard St. Paul preach. The narrative in the Book of Acts tells us that St. Paul and his companions remained some days at

Philippi before the Sabbath. When the Sabbath came, however, they went not into the synagogue (for Philippi does not seem to have possessed one), but to a place by the river-side, "where prayer was wont to made."

CHAPTER VIII

FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI, AND IN MACEDONIA

THE remains of an arched gateway leading to the river-side still stand upright among the ruins of Philippi, or did so very recently. Through this gateway St. Paul must most probably have passed. Philippi had been founded by Philip, King of Macedonia—the father of Alexander the Great—and was a place of considerable importance when St. Paul visited it. Among the congregation of Jews who assembled by the river-side to keep holy the Sabbath day, was Lydia, a seller of purple, from the city of Thyatira, in Asia Minor. She is specially mentioned as one who attended to the things which were spoken by Paul. “The Lord opened her heart” to receive His Holy Spirit, and when she with her household had been baptized, she proved her genuine faith by inviting the apostolic missionaries to become her guests.

We have often to regret the concise narrative of Holy Writ. It cannot really matter to us whether St. Paul remained weeks or months at Philippi ; yet we would like to know. The events are recorded which led to some result, yet we know nothing of the time which elapsed between the event and its result. Thus we read in Acts xvi. 16: “And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed

with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the Most High God, which shew unto us the way of salvation."

"Come over into Macedonia and help us," was the cry of the Macedonian St. Paul saw in his vision at Troas, and deep need was there for this appeal. This poor pythoness was but one of hundreds of those wretched servants of the heathen priesthood, who were ruled with a rod of iron by their infamous masters. Yet her last cry was a cry of faith; she stood upon the shores of Europe to greet the Apostles with a faithful welcome, and then the sybil's voice was hushed for ever.

Well might the poor pythoness cry of the Christian Apostles, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which shew unto us the way of salvation," for she knew well some of the secrets of that prison house from which she longed to be saved. We are told that she followed the Apostles "many days; but Paul being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her, and he came out the same hour." Thus the poor tortured representative of a long line of panting pythonesses found healing and rest at last, for St. Paul well knew what he did when he spoke those words. Many years afterwards, when writing to the church at Philippi, he reminds it, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

This healing of the pythoness led to the expulsion of St. Paul from Philippi, for when her late masters found that she had received a spirit beyond their control—a spirit which had already saved her from their pollution—and that all hope of future gain from her was gone, they brought Paul and Silas before the magistrates, and accused them as teaching unlawful customs. We are told in Acts xvi. 22 : “And the multitude rose up together against them, and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them ; and when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely.”

Some questioners have asked here, “Why did not St. Paul plead his Roman citizenship at Philippi, as he did afterwards at Jerusalem, and thus escape the ‘many stripes’?” We are all too apt to look far and wide for a reason, when the answer is extremely simple. Experience teaches in all travel, and although the Apostles were under Divine guidance, they were expected to use natural means for their own preservation in general. St. Paul had but just entered Europe, and it most possibly never occurred to him to plead his rights as a citizen of Rome. It is possible that Silas did not possess these privileges—we do not certainly know. The two “servants of the Most High God” appealed to their Master, however, against the treatment they had received. We are told that “At midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them ; and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed.”

Although the prisoners made no attempt to escape, other fetters besides those of the Apostles were loosed that night ; for the jailor was set free in Christ, and was admitted into His Church, together with all his household ; for we are told "he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."

When morning dawned the magistrates, who had probably been alarmed by the earthquake, sent orders for the release of the Apostles ; but St. Paul, who would not plead his Roman citizenship to escape punishment, was not willing to receive stripes without teaching a lesson to those who had so unjustly administered them. He knew well that the trial to which he had been subjected was a mere mockery, and said therefore : "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison ; and now do they thrust us out privily ? nay verily ; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates : and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans ; and they came and besought them and desired them to depart out of the city. And they went out of the prison and entered into the house of Lydia : and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed."

It may be said here that St. Paul uses the plural Romans, thus seeming to imply that Silas was also a Roman citizen. We know well that royalty always uses the plural, and it is quite possible that St. Paul may have used it in this sense, he being the head of his little band ; but it is also possible that the con-

verted jailor may have reminded the Apostle of his privilege, and advised him to plead it. We can only say in this, as in so many other cases, "We do not know." One other point it would be well to note before leaving Philippi. In Acts xvi. 10 we first find the narrator of the history speaking of himself, when, describing St. Paul's vision at Troas, he says, "And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go," &c. Thus we learn that St. Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles, accompanied St. Paul on his first voyage into Europe, and was with him at intervals through the remainder of his life, as recorded in the Acts; he seems also to have been with the Apostle during both his imprisonments at Rome, for in Col. iv. 14 we find "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you." And in Philemon, written at the same time, Lucas is mentioned also; while in 2 Timothy, written during the Apostle's imprisonment, we read, "Only Luke is with me."

St. Luke is believed to have remained at Philippi, and continued the Christian work which St. Paul commenced, quietly labouring for his Lord until St. Paul next visited the city.

Driven out from Philippi, St. Paul and his companions travelled westward. They had friends who guided them through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia—cities whose names are familiar to every schoolboy; for was not Amphipolis the city which was so fiercely contested a battle-ground in the Peloponnesian war, where there fell in one day Brasidas, the noble Spartan general, and Cleon, the demagogue of Athens? St. Paul does not seem to have remained in either city. He went on to Thessalonica—a comparatively modern town, for it

had been built by Cassander, the Macedonian, who married Thessalonica, the sister of Alexander the Great, and called this city by her name. We may imagine that one reason which induced the Apostle to stay at Thessalonica was that there was a synagogue of the Jews. We know from the history of Josephus that many Jews accompanied Alexander the Great in his wars, and it is possible that some of them may have returned with Cassander, and when he rebuilt this city they may have dedicated some of the spoils of their campaign to the erection of a building for worship. Be this as it may, we know that there was a synagogue at Thessalonica, and, as we are told in the opening verses of Acts xvii., "Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must have suffered and risen again from the dead ; and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas, and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few."

These converts must have rejoiced the heart of the Apostle ; but there was no rest for him in this world. The unbelieving Jews stirred up a tumult ; they assaulted the house of Jason, whose guests the Apostles were, and brought him, with some other Christians, before the magistrates, saying, "These, that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also, whom Jason hath received, and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus."

The magistrates of Thessalonica acted with more forbearance than the Jews wished. They merely

took security of Jason to keep the peace ; but the brethren, fearing for the safety of the Apostle, induced him to depart from the city by night, and travel at once to Berea with Silas and Timothy. We find that there was a Jewish synagogue at Berea also, and there St. Paul found some kindred souls ; for we are told : " These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." We do not know how long a time elapsed before the Thessalonian unbelievers followed the Apostles ; but they came at last, stirred up strife, and at length the Christian Bereans compelled St. Paul once more to seek safety in flight. We read in Acts xvii. 14: " And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go, as it were, to the sea ; but Silas and Timotheus abode there still, and they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens, and, receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed."

St. Luke was thus left at Philippi, Silas and Timotheus at Berea, while St. Paul was alone at Athens.

CHAPTER IX

ATHENS—EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS

WE read in Acts xvii. 15 that when the friends who brought St. Paul to Athens returned to Berea, they carried a message from the Apostle to Timothy and Silas, bidding them to "come unto him with all speed." Now, from the Acts of the Apostles we do not know whether they did do so or not ; but in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians the Apostle, after reminding the Christians of Thessalonica of his anxiety for their welfare, continues to express his remembrance of their faith and love, and to sympathise with them in the persecutions they had endured for Christ, both while he was still with them and apparently after his departure, assuring them that as the churches in Judæa suffered persecution from their own countrymen (the Jews), they, the Thessalonians, were but receiving the usual reward of the followers of Christ when they were persecuted by their fellow-countrymen for His sake.

In the third chapter of the Epistle the Apostle continues to express his anxiety for their welfare in these words : "Wherefore, when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone, and sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith."

Taken in connection with the history recorded in Acts, these words seem clearly to imply that when Timothy came to the Apostle at Athens, he was immediately sent back to Macedonia—not only to Berea, but also to the Church at Thessalonica. The Apostle had found work for his Lord at Athens, and full freedom of speech ; he could, therefore, spare Timothy to bear messages from him to the Christians of Macedonia. In 1 Thessalonians iii. 12 we read the cause of this first Epistle to the Thessalonians being written. Timothy had returned, bringing such good news of the churches that St. Paul sent him there once more, not merely with verbal messages, but with this Apostolic Epistle: “But now, when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have a good remembrance of us, always desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you ; therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our afflictions and distresses by your faith.”

Having thus assured the Thessalonians of his interest in them, the Apostle proceeds to deliver this sacred message, warning them to abstain from the sins of heathenism, commanding them to “abstain from all appearance of evil,” and strengthening their faith in the certain reappearance of their Lord, yet warning them, as their Lord had done before, that “Of that day and of that hour knoweth no man ; for the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night.” They are, therefore, commanded to watch, and not sleep as others do ; but ever in their armour of Christian faith, hope, and love, they are commanded “to prove all things,” and yet are to beware that they “quench not the Spirit.”

In fact, the Epistle is but a brief summary of the Gospel of our Saviour, refreshing the memories of those to whom these great truths had been already communicated by word of mouth, and who had already a regularly organised ministry; for the Apostle was a missionary bishop, with an unlimited diocese, and his first care seems to have been the appointment of a regular ministry in every church he founded, exhorting the brethren to "esteem them very highly, for their work's sake" (1 Thess. v. 12).

Thus, as Dr. Paley teaches us, we perceive that in this part the Acts of the Apostles is very fully supplemented by the Epistle to the Thessalonians.

Now we have to consider the second Epistle to the Thessalonians. It also is superscribed as having been "written from Athens." Dr. Paley gives no clear decision as to his own opinion concerning the date of this Epistle.

We must remember here, that we have no record of the time during which St. Paul remained at Athens. He was at Jerusalem in the third or early part of the fourth year of the reign of Claudius, when Herod Agrippa died, and St. James was beheaded. We know that he arrived at Corinth when it was filled by Jews who had been expelled from Rome by Claudius Cæsar. Suetonius, the Roman historian, tells us that this expulsion of the Jews from Rome took place in the ninth year of Claudius. This leaves, therefore, but five years for the events which are narrated in Acts xiii. xiv. xv. and xvi. During those five years which succeeded the death of Herod Agrippa (when, as we know

from the last verses of Acts xi. and the first verse of Acts xii., St. Paul was in Jerusalem, bearing the alms from the Christians at Antioch) he had made three eventful journeys. The first was his first circuit with St. Barnabas through Pisidia, Phrygia, Lycaonia, Pamphylia, and also Cyprus. This journey must have taken at least a year. Then came a rest at Antioch, followed by the journey to Jerusalem for the counsel of the Apostles and elders. This journey need not have taken longer than a few weeks, or, at the most, two or three months. It was succeeded by another ministerial rest, in labour at home, among Christians at Antioch; and then came the longer journey through Cilicia, Galatia, Phrygia, Mysia, and on into Europe—the journey in which Silas and Timothy were constantly with the Apostle until he went alone from Macedonia to Athens, and again alone from Athens to Corinth. We know from Acts xviii. 5 that St. Paul had been some time in Corinth before he was joined there by Silas and Timothy. It seems likely, therefore, that after taking the first Epistle to Thessalonica, Timothy may have returned, bringing intelligence of the danger the Church was in, from the sins denounced in the second Epistle, and the Apostle then decided to send him and Silas once more into Macedonia, bearing this second Epistle.

This second Epistle to the Thessalonians was evidently written as a guard against a special temptation, then fiercely assaulting the whole Church. We find from the histories of Josephus and of Tacitus that the whole Roman Empire was seething with revolt. Judæa was in that awful state of condemnation which her own sons had invoked when they

cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children."

I imagine that no one can read the histories of Tacitus and of Josephus during this period without a feeling of horror and of repulsion. Tacitus tells of contests between the Parthians and the Jews, the Samaritans and the Jews, and describes the state of Judæa thus: "The Galileans were under the control of Cumanus; Felix governed the Samaritans. These two nations, always fierce and turbulent, were at variance with each other, and now, when they despised their governors, their animosity broke out with redoubled fury. They waged a predatory war, laid waste each other's lands, rushed from their ambuscades to sudden encounters, and, at times, tried their strength in regular engagements. The plunder of the war was given up to their rapacious governors, who, therefore, connived at the mischief. The disorders of the province grew to an alarming height, insomuch that the two governors were forced at last to have recourse to arms, in order to quell the tumult. . . . Claudius, duly apprised of the rebellion and the causes from which it sprung, sent a commission directing an inquiry, with power to try and pronounce judgment on the two provincial ministers. To make an end of all difficulties, Quadratus placed Felix on the tribunal among the judges, and, by that measure, sheltered him from his enemies. Cumanus was found guilty of the crimes committed by both, and, in this manner, the peace of the province was restored" ("Annals," bk. xii. ch. 54.)

Josephus, describing the state of his own country at this period, says that Felix actually bribed men to assassinate the high priest Jonathan, who had

remonstrated with him, and, "As this murder was never avenged, the robbers went up with the greatest security at the festivals after this time, and, having weapons concealed in like manner as before, and mingling themselves among the multitude, they slew certain of their own enemies, and were subservient to other men for money, and slew others, not only in remote parts of the city, but in the temple itself also ; for they had the boldness to murder men there, without thinking of the impiety of which they were guilty. And this seems to me to have been the reason why God, out of His hatred to these men's wickedness, rejected our city ; and, as for the temple, He no longer esteemed it sufficiently pure for Him to inhabit therein, but brought the Romans upon us, and threw a fire upon the city to purge it, and brought upon us, our wives and children, slavery, as desirous to make us wiser of our calamities."

Impostors, assuming Divine missions, added to the miseries of the Jews by their lying pretensions. One of these led a large multitude to the waters of the Jordan, affirming that they would open at his command to prepare a passage for them. Another declared that the walls of Jerusalem would fall down when he should speak the word of command. Roman soldiers, with spears and swords, scattered these impostors and their dupes ; but fresh ones were ever ready to take the place of the old.

Knowing these circumstances, we can the more easily understand the circumstances of the Universal Church when the second Epistle to the Thessalonians was written. The Apostle warns it "not to be soon shaken in mind, as though the day of the Lord was

at hand." Our Saviour Himself foresaw this time when He said, in St. Matthew xxiv. 23: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not; for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

When our Lord and Saviour visits either a man, or a Church, or a nation, or the world at large, He will reveal Himself, and, by the brightness of His coming, will reveal the man of sin He comes to destroy.

The whole purport of the second Epistle seems to be a warning against the sins introduced by these impostors, who induced people to leave their lawful labours to follow an imaginary Christ. Although, however, the Epistle is, in a certain sense, applicable only to the Church to which it was addressed and the circumstances of the times, yet, like all Holy Scripture, it is eternally true. To-day, as eighteen hundred years ago, the Church needs its warnings. There is still as real and as living a man of sin as there was when St. Paul wrote that Epistle—still as really and truly a "wicked one, who opposeth himself and exalteth himself above all that is called God or worshipped." As really and truly is there this spirit of opposition to God and His revelation as there was when St. Paul lived. In each one of us there is a "man of sin"—deny it who can!—and it is only by the brightness of the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to the soul that we are enabled to perceive our danger, and pray for salvation from "that strong delusion of believing a lie to our own eternal damnation." The whole Epistle reveals a

convulsed state of society, and yet how graciously it concludes! Where the Spirit of Christ is, there is peace; the fruits of the Spirit are manifest, and the Lord of Peace Himself will bestow His blessing, with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER X

ATHENS, AREOPAGUS, FOUNDATION OF THE GREEK CHURCH

XENOPHON, the Athenian, when writing of his native city 400 years before St. Paul visited it, excuses magistrates for their delay in administering justice, upon the plea of their numerous duties, one of which he thus describes: "For how could they do so, when they have to celebrate in the first place more festivals than any other city of Greece, and during these it is impossible for any one to settle any part of the business of the State. . . . As to sacrifices, and temples, and festivals, and consecrated groves, the people, knowing that it is impossible for any poor man to make offerings and feasts, and have temples, and to live in a beautiful and extensive city, have discovered by what means these privileges may be secured to them. The State accordingly sacrifices many victims at the public expense, while it is the people that feast on them and distribute them among themselves by lot."

Another writer, who writes later than Xenophon, affirms that "at Athens it is easier to find a god than a man."

This seems to have been always true. The whole city was filled with idols. It is true that the idols were works of Art, priceless, peerless; yet they were idols, worshipped as such, whose mutilation or de-

filement was regarded as a national calamity. The worshippers at the different shrines believed they were answered by the god or goddess—the nymph or hero who presided over the shrine, or resided in the cella. Modern infidelity may seek to merge the lines which separate the worship of these idols from Christianity, but St. Paul knew better.

There was a synagogue at Athens; there may have been one there in the days of Plato. We do not know this; but we do know that there was one when St. Paul was there, and at first he preached to the Jews, for “his heart was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry” (Acts xvii. 16).

If Athens was superstitious, it was, however, but as all superstition is—a mere mask for real infidelity. There can be no true faith in an idol, or in that which an idol can represent. Thus, superstitious Athens was always the home of the so-called “seekers after truth”—ever seeking, but never finding; for finding implies learning, and learning implies lowliness, while all Athenians sought pre-eminence, saving only Socrates, who was pronounced the wisest man of his age, because while every one else supposed themselves to be prudent men, he alone really felt that he knew nothing, yet strove to learn.

We are told that while St. Paul awaited the arrival of Silas and Timothy, he not only disputed with the Jews in the synagogue, but also “with the devout persons, and in the market daily.”

This word market gives no idea of the beautiful Agora of Athens, with its statues and altars of the twelve principal Grecian gods, its marble colonnades, its shady walks, its surrounding temples, and its

brilliant assemblages of all that was beautiful, learned, or picturesque in the city. It is true that it had booths for the sale of various articles around the wide open space, and that there was a regular market for horses within its bounds. The horses of Thessaly were brought here to be sold also ; yet so wide was its extent, so beautiful its surroundings, that these minor matters served but to enliven the scene. The great philosophers of Athens were frequently to be found in the Agora with their pupils, and this minute touch of real life in Athens, which is given in Acts xvii., exactly accords with what we read in Athenian records. We find that as St. Paul spoke with burning fervour to all who cared to listen to him in the Agora, the lounging Epicureans and Stoics encountered him ; and as they listened to him they said, " He seemeth to be a setter-forth of new gods," because he preached unto them Jesus and the Resurrection.

This was quite true. The resurrection from sin and the new life unto holiness, preached by St. Paul, would be as repulsive to the Stoic as to the Epicurean, yet they desired to hear him in a manner more suitable to the subject he discussed. " And they took him and brought him into Areopagus, saying, ' May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is, for thou bringest certain strange things unto our ears ? ' for all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing."

The Areopagus, before which St. Paul was now brought, held its court upon Mars Hill, as its name implies. This was an assemblage of Elders in the very noblest sense of the word ; it had the cognisance

of all matters pertaining to religion and morality. Every Areopagite must be of pure Attic descent, and have previously served the city in its very highest office, that of Archon. Thus, when St. Paul addressed the court of Areopagus he addressed men of the very first families in Athens, men who were accustomed to rule and to be revered. The address of the Apostle has ever inspired admiration by its fitness for the time, and the audience ; so fearless, yet courteous, so reverent, yet commanding. There is no half-heartedness, no half-perception of the difference between truth and falsehood, ignorance and knowledge.

“The times of this ignorance God overlooked, but now commanded all men everywhere to repent.” Repent ! What a strange word to use to an Athenian audience ! Repent ? and of what ?

“For, supposing that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.”

A strange sin this to an Athenian mind ! Yet, as St. Paul told his converts, “By the law comes the knowledge of sin” ; and it needs true knowledge to discover that it is, indeed, a sin to worship the creation of our own imagination, and defraud the Creator of heaven, and of earth, and of all that in them is, of the only thing He really cares for—the love, the grateful, adoring love, of the creatures He has created, and for whom He so incessantly cares. This was, indeed, a sin to be repented of—and why ? The Apostle answers the unspoken question : “Because He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness. He whom God hath ordained shall then judge every man, and of

this we have the assurance, since God hath raised Him from the dead."

Oh venerable Areopagites! Here is a man who repeats to you the truths which Socrates proposed to your sires—truths at which poor Socrates guessed, truths for which he longed, yet of which he could receive no certainty; for the eyes of his soul were blinded by his heathen nurture.

This man is no Socrates, however. He does not speculate upon the subject. He speaks with certainty not of what may be, but of what has been, what is, what will be. The Areopagites felt that the case was beyond their jurisdiction.

"We will hear thee again of this matter," said some, with true Athenian politeness; "others mocked, but some clave unto him."

We know that at least one Areopagite became a Christian, and we know that one Greek lady chose the better part; but we know the names of but two Athenian Christians, "Damaris and Dionysius the Areopagite," who has ever been considered the first bishop of Athens.

Who does not wish for a longer record of the events which took place during St. Paul's stay in Athens? and yet it is perhaps better to con over every word he then wrote which we do possess, to learn his lessons of faith, righteousness, and Christian love, than to follow him in his walks upon the sunny slopes of Hymettus, or to the rocky point of Sunium upon the week-day, while on the Sabbath he still instructed his converts and his countrymen in the fulfilment of the divine promises recorded in the sacred Scriptures, and confirmed their faith in the resurrection of Christ

Jesus from the dead. We must remember, however, that although the events of St. Paul's stay at Athens are but slightly recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, we possess at least one apostolic epistle written during that time.

We do not know how long St. Paul remained at Athens ; but we do know that from thence he passed on to Corinth—Silas and Timothy being in Macedonia. Corinth, the next great city which St. Paul visited, was situated upon the isthmus of Corinth. Behind it rose the famous Acro Corinthus—a lofty rock, rising some 2000 feet above the level of the sea. Upon this rock was erected the military citadel, and the Acropolis, of which the magnificent temple of Venus, to whom the city was dedicated, was the principal ornament. Roman Corinth, splendid though it was, was however not to be compared with the ancient city which presided over the Isthmian games in the palmy days of Greek splendour. Ancient Corinth fell beneath the arms of the Roman consul Mummius, and its fall has been the subject for many historians. The Corinth in which St. Paul resided for nearly two years was built upon the ruins of the ancient city by orders from Julius Cæsar. During one entire century the ruins of Greek Corinth lay beneath the lofty Acro Corinthus ; but a new life—a more immortal fame—awaited the Isthmian city. When Corinth was built in regular Roman order—noble and stately—it was repeopled from Rome, chiefly by freedmen. These freedmen may, however, have been descendants of noble Greeks who had fought for the freedom of their country against Roman consuls, and, failing to free her, were led captive to grace the Roman

triumph. Slaves and freedmen in Rome were a very different class from the slaves of mediæval or of modern days. Corinth, however, although at first chiefly peopled by soldiers and freedmen, from its peculiar position upon the isthmus, soon regained its old commercial importance, its old reputation for wealth, and for the sins which so often attend upon wealth, idleness, luxury, and sensuality. When St. Paul visited Corinth, its reputation under its Roman rulers was pretty much what it had been among the Greeks—as far apart from the busy intellectual activity of Athens as it was from the simple, martial spirit of Sparta.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AT CORINTH

CORINTH had two ports. The eastern one—Cenchræa—served as a means of communication with Athens and Asia, while Lechæum, on the western side, gave ready intercourse with Italy, and the western parts of Europe and Africa.

When St. Paul arrived at Corinth, he found among the Jews, who had been recently exiled from Rome, two fugitives whose names are very dear to the Christian. We read in the first verses of Acts xviii.: "After these things Paul departed from Athens and came to Corinth, and found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome); and because he was of the same craft he abode with them, for, by their occupation, they were tent-makers."

What a happy time that must have been for Aquila and Priscilla!—working day after day with St. Paul, eating every meal with him, joining in the prayers he raised, "singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord," and learning from the Apostle every day that Gospel-lore which enabled them afterwards to become teachers to the learned Apollos.

We know that it was the Jewish custom, as well as that of Athens, to teach every man some craft, by which, if necessary, he could earn his own living

honestly, and it is very possible that at first St. Paul may have quietly laboured among his new friends ; but when Silas and Timotheus returned he was aroused to his old earnest fervour. We are told in Acts xviii. 5 : " And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is Christ ; and when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads ; I am clean. From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house ; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized."

We find from 1 Cor. i. 14, 15, 16, that Stephanus and his household were the first Corinthians admitted into the Church, and that St. Paul baptized them, as well as Crispus and a certain Gaius, himself. He seems generally to have left this duty to the ministers he appointed in the Church, and except in special cases—as that of the Philippian jailor—did not consider that he was called upon to baptize when others were at hand to administer this sacrament.

These conversions must have been very pleasing to the heart of St. Paul, for he was now driven out from the Jewish synagogue, and seems to have been in a depressed state of mind. Yet his burden was lightened for him at last, for we are told in Acts xviii. 9 : " Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not

thy peace ; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city."

Thus we perceive that when the dark cloud was threatening the Apostle's peace, his Lord appeared to him once more with comfort, and that which is the source of all comfort to the Christian—command. When the Lord clearly reveals His will, when He points out the work He would have us do, or the path from which He would stay our feet, then we are happy. It is the silence of the Lord which dismays the Christian—the cloud over his path which distresses him. It is in the absence of his Guide that he cries out, like Moses of old : " If Thy Presence go not with me, carry me not hence." Thus was it with St. Paul. This assurance from his Lord of the course of action upon which he was engaged being blessed, was all he required. " And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them."

It seems that there must have been some change in the administration of the province during those eighteen months, for we read in the following verse : " And when Gallio was deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat, saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you ; but if it be a question of words, and names, and of your law, look ye to it, for I will be no judge of such matters. And he drave them from the judgment-

seat. Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of these things."

Thus, we perceive that the promise given to St. Paul in vision was fulfilled. The Jews had set upon him, but were not able to hurt him. The chief ruler of the synagogue, who had succeeded Crispus, had been beaten by the indignant Greek populace, who were always ready to oppose the Jews, and who, no doubt, resented this attack upon the eloquent orator who lived so blameless a life among them.

It has been suggested that this Sosthenes was afterwards converted, and is the individual mentioned in 1 Cor. i. This may be so, but the name was a common one; and although we may hope it was so, we can only hope that this Sosthenes was converted to the faith he had once persecuted. We cannot certainly know.

The tumult at Corinth did not drive the Apostle away at once. We are told that "he tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila, having shorn his head at Cenchræa, for he had a vow. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there." The Apostle did not linger at Ephesus. He went into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews during his stay; and we read that they desired him to remain with them, but he consented not. He had set his heart upon keeping the approaching feast at Jerusalem. Therefore, leaving Aquila and Priscilla with his new friends, he bade them farewell, saying, "I must, by all means,

keep this feast that cometh at Jerusalem ; but I will return again unto you, if God will."

"And he sailed from Ephesus, and when he had landed at Cæsarea, and gone up and saluted the Church, he went down to Antioch."

This is the only record we possess of that Feast for which St. Paul left Greece, and withstood the solicitations of the Ephesians to remain with them ; and yet how much is implied.

We are rather too apt to imagine a St. Paul : we look upon him as being continually raised by the Divine Spirit far above all human considerations ; yet, although it is true that—as he himself declares—"the strength of God was perfected in his weakness," there is another view of the great Apostle which we should not overlook. I mean his recognition, his loving recognition of human sympathy, and of human help. He lived no isolated, self-centred life, but had a large, loving, warm human heart, large enough to bear the burdens of all the Churches he visited, and to rejoice in all their joys ; large enough to embrace in one sacred "love in Christ," as well the poor slave Onesimus as his master Philemon, Phebe the servant of the Church at Cenchræa, and the great chamberlain of the city of Corinth.

This journey of St. Paul's to Jerusalem seems to have been undertaken solely for the purpose of the refreshment of his own spirit by communion with the Church at Jerusalem ; and, therefore, we have no record of the events, because they were personal. He had already visited Jerusalem twice since his Apostolic commission—once when he and Barnabas carried the contributions of the Antiochians to Jeru-

saalem (Acts xi. 29, 30), and again when he and Barnabas went with a deputation from Antioch for instructions concerning the circumcision of the Gentiles (Acts xv.). In his fourth visit to Jerusalem, St. Paul and his friends carried contributions from the Macedonian churches to Jerusalem; but this one was undertaken by the Apostle alone. Apparently he needed sympathy, and sought it from the Mother Church. We know that St. James, the relative of our Saviour, was still living, and still presided over the Church; but we wonder whether St. Paul met many of the other Apostles at that sacred festival. Was his old friend and protector, St. Barnabas, there? We do not know. We only know that the journey must have been a refreshment to the Apostle's heart.

I have ventured to imagine that, as we know that St. Peter visited Bithynia, it is possible he may have been there when St. Paul was "stayed by the Spirit" from preaching there, and sent into Europe instead. Now, we find that after St. Paul left Corinth upon this occasion, some of the Corinthian Christians professed themselves disciples of St. Peter as opposed to St. Paul: and even of the Lord of St. Peter and St. Paul (1 Cor. i. 12). It has, therefore, seemed to me very probable that St. Peter may at this time have passed through Macedonia and visited Corinth, sailing from thence to Rome, where his first convert, Cornelius the centurion, whom he had baptized at Cæsarea, would be sure to receive him with a sincere welcome, if, as was usual among Roman soldiers, he had returned to his own home, after the lapse of more than twenty years. This is, however, mere conjecture.

After describing so briefly the journey of the Apostle to Jerusalem, and his subsequent journey to Antioch: "And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia, and Phrygia in order, strengthening or confirming all the disciples."

Thus we find that St. Paul remained some time at Antioch, and once more journeyed by land over the mountain chain of the Taurus, and visited those Galatian churches to which he afterwards addressed his apostolic Epistle. From Galatia the Apostle travelled through Phrygia, and if he had not already visited Colossæ and Laodicæa, it seems almost certain that he must have done so upon this occasion, since they were at so short a distance from Ephesus, towards which city his course was now directed.

The first Epistle to Timothy is superscribed as having been written from Laodicæa, and commentators speculate in vain upon the time when it was written. It matters very little, however, whether it was written during this period, when St. Paul remained at Ephesus more than two years, and was, therefore, in the immediate neighbourhood of Laodicæa, or whether it was written, as some suppose, after the Apostle's release from his first imprisonment at Rome. It is an Epistle which still speaks with authority to every bishop and every servant of Christ, although eighteen hundred years have elapsed since it was written, and Laodicæa lies in ruins.

CHAPTER XII

EPHESUS, LAODICÆA—APOLLOS, AQUILA,
AND PRISCILLA

LAODICÆA is about forty miles east of Ephesus. Whether St. Paul wrote to Timothy from there or not we do not know. We do not know where Timothy laboured during this journey of St. Paul, who seems to have been entirely alone. But we know that after passing through Phrygia the Apostle arrived at the great commercial city, the great resort of devotees, and of all wonder seekers, Ephesus, whose ruins still attest the magnificence of its temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. When St. Paul arrived at Ephesus the Jews of that city seem to have been in rather a singular condition. The synagogue had always been open to every Jew, and the ruler of the synagogue would have been thought strangely discourteous who did not invite the passing stranger, who entered for worship, to "speak if he had any word of exhortation"; yet it seems that in the Ephesian synagogue the Christians, Priscilla and Aquila, worshipped regularly. One of the converts to St. John the Baptist also arrived at Ephesus. In Acts xviii. 24 he is thus described: "And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus; this man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and, being fervent in the

Spirit, he spake, and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John."

This last is a very singular expression to us, although it was perfectly understood by the first Christians. In so far as we know, the extent of the baptism of St. John was simply preparatory—repentance and putting away the sins of the flesh—looking forward, however, to Him who should take all sin away. St. John the Baptist had been beheaded before the crucifixion of his Lord. This fulfilment of the sacred law and prophecies was, therefore, unknown to him. The descent of the Holy Ghost, and the commandment of our Saviour to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," was also unknown to St. John. Thus we are told that when the eloquent Apollos preached in the Ephesian synagogue, Aquila and Priscilla "took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." They had studied under St. Paul, who had received the fuller revelation of the Gospel from those Apostles who had been with their Lord during the whole of His ministry, and were therefore competent to instruct this fervent disciple of the holy Baptist.

This episode in the life of St. Paul is very interesting. We see the loving husband and wife banished from Rome, yet finding a new life and Saviour at Corinth, through the teaching of St. Paul. We find that at Ephesus they were permitted to spread the blessing they had received, and to send forth another faithful soldier of Christ to encounter the armies of Satan. When Apollos wished to pass into Greece, then we find that his new friends gave him letters of introduc-

tion to the Church at Corinth, and so useful was he to the Corinthian Church, that we are told "he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ" (Acts xviii. 28).

From 1 Cor. iii. we read that the eloquence of Apollos and his many gifts tempted the weaker Christians to that schism—that setting man in the place of Christ—which is so besetting a sin to human nature. Thus the Apostle writes—

"There is among you envying, and strife, and divisions. Are ye not carnal? and walk as men: for while one saith, I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Who, then, is Paul? and who is Apollos? but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

We find also from this Epistle that another great sin was striving to force an entrance into the Church.

"Now, this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

It is very easy to understand how this division arose, since, unhappily, there seems to be no cure for the evil; and one of the latest lessons learned by the Christian is this absolute separation of the substance from the shadow. And, indeed, as there are certain material surroundings in every spiritual grace, it is excusable to some extent. How many parents defer the baptism of their children until some favoured minister can administer the Sacra-

ment. How many communicants hesitate to approach the table of their Lord, because it is served by another minister than the one to whom they are accustomed. Yet, oh, for the heart to perceive the truth that, in baptism, the child is given up to God, to be received into His family, and to be inscribed with His name—that it is henceforth a member of the family which has been redeemed from sin and death by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that, from the moment of its reception into that family, the soul is free in Christ! And, oh, for the heart to walk worthily as a member of that sacred family, redeemed at so bitter a cost!

We find in the opening verses of Acts xix. that, although St. Paul denounced the growing sin of schism in the Church, and charged it to look upward to the Great Head, from Whom alone cometh salvation, teaching them to separate the spiritual graces bestowed in sacraments from their merely human surroundings, he himself did not hesitate to rebaptize some converts of St. John the Baptist, who in answer to his inquiry said, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."

In Acts xix. 8 we are told that St. Paul, after his arrival at Ephesus, "went into the synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months," but this preaching of the Apostle very naturally aroused the bitterness of Jewish opposition. Then St. Paul finally separated the Christian Church at Ephesus from the synagogue, as he had previously done at Corinth. We are told in verse 9 that "He departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they

which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

The word Asia, when used in the New Testament, simply implies Asia Minor; but when we are told that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, we take for granted that during these two years St. Paul still pursued his apostolic labours, simply making Ephesus his headquarters, and personally superintending the ministry of Timothy and others whom he had appointed to minister to the Church.

It has been supposed that it was during this period the Apostle visited Crete, and placed Titus in charge of the Cretan Church; also, that it was during this period the Apostle was exposed to those "perils of water and shipwrecks" which are recorded in 2 Cor. xi. Three years seems a long time for the Apostle to remain in one neighbourhood. We know that he was a great walker, and that a journey of twenty miles "afoot" was a journey of his own choice. Knowing this, then, we can easily believe that during his three years' residence at Ephesus the Apostle visited most of those seven churches to which the Book of Revelations refers, the remaining six of which were at no very great distance from the first one addressed—that of Ephesus.

Priscilla and Aquila were still at Ephesus, and, from 1 Cor. xvi. 19, the Apostle seems to imply that they had gathered a little congregation around them. He says: "Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the Church that is in their house." Thus, we perceive that the Apostle was surrounded by old friends and Christian fellowship during his stay.

We read in Acts. xix. 11 that—

“God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul, so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.”

Thus, we perceive, or rather are once more reminded of, the many gifts of the Holy Ghost which were bestowed upon St. Paul. He had been endowed with the gift of that eloquent fiery tongue, which convinces and persuades—the gift of a fearless, active spirit, which braves all dangers and surmounts all obstacles in the fervour of faith—the pen of the ready writer, guided by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost Himself, Whose wisdom illuminates every page. The gift of a quick discernment was also given to St. Paul—that discernment which enabled him to reason with overpowering logic, as well with the subtle refining Greek as with the dogged Scribes, the Ritualists of the decaying temple at Jerusalem. This discernment was as singular as it was perfect, since he who could distinguish between his own personal opinion upon a subject and the command of the Holy Spirit, must surely have been largely endowed with a discerning mind.

Prophetic inspiration in a minor degree had also been entrusted to St. Paul; the miraculous gifts of healing, and with them that rare and holy gift of casting out evil spirits.

Yes! I know that people in these days say there are no evil spirits, and we have a thousand disguises for the terrible reality. Yet, oh, for the primitive faith that “the works of the devil are manifest”!

The whole of this subject is full of mystery, yet

we cannot deny the truths we see. How often does an evil spirit gain entrance into some unguarded soul, and there subdue every faculty to his own will, until a Mightier than he passing by, the stricken soul cries out, or some loving heart, which perceives its state, cries out for it, to that Saviour, Who enters in, bringing salvation to the lost, redemption to the captive thrall of Satan, and rest to the weary, troubled, heavy-laden soul.

We Christians of the nineteenth century do not, as it seems to me, sufficiently consider how much we owe to the perpetual labours of the Church during the long centuries which have preceded our era. We often think perhaps that our ancestors laid too much stress upon sacramental obligations; yet are we not conscious that some of the awful sins of heathenism are almost extinct among Christian nations? The renunciation of the devil and all his works, as a primary obligation among Christians, must surely have been, to some extent, a putting ourselves among those who will be kept from his power, so that gradually the whole world may be freed from his fetters, and become subject to Christ. We read in Acts xix. 13 that "certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by that Jesus Whom Paul preaches. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered, and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped upon them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them; so that they fled out of that house, naked and wounded. And this

was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus ; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified." Ephesus was at that time the headquarters in the western world of so-called magic, that enemy to faith in God which Moses had to encounter before Pharaoh, and which, to this day, is so subtle an enemy to the Christian. He who practises magic arts, whether secretly or openly, uses certain powers of electricity and magnetism for the purpose of producing a delusion or an illusion of the senses. He affirms that he is the agent, if he be honest ; if he be a pretender to supernatural powers, he affirms that he is the source of that power, over which, in fact, he has, as we well know, but a very limited control. The Holy Spirit of God has taught men how to draw forth and use the various elements which He holds in the hollow of His hand ; but let not man presume to suppose that he thus creates the elements, or forget that the source of all the elements is Divine : belongs alone to God. We use the force of descending streams of water or the rush of the health-inspiring wind to turn our mills, and bear us onward over the deep ; but who can create the river of water ? who can bring the breath of the fresh wind from the western waves to bear away the clouds which drop over our earth ? No man can create one elementary power, although the knowledge of the use to which the powers of electricity and magnetism can be applied is now much more widely spread than it was in the Apostolic age, when the heathen priesthoods or the magicians alone used these powers.

The difference then between the magical delusions of heathenism and the real gifts of the Holy Ghost

is clearly perceptible in every recorded miracle of Holy Writ. This attempt of the opponents of Christ to use His name without either faith in Him or submission to His authority, this taking upon themselves the authority over Him, instead of learning from Him, had, however, one good effect. The publicity of their overthrow produced many converts to Christianity, and many of those who had hitherto lived by pandering to the superstition or ignorance of their credulous dupes, now came and openly burned their books of delusive magic, even though by so doing they sacrificed a large revenue.

The Ephesian Church was now firmly established, and once more St. Paul planned out a journey, a course of action which was to embrace several years ; he would revisit Macedonia, and Greece, sail thence to Jerusalem, and "after having been there, I must also see Rome." Thus planned St. Paul, and all his plans were to a certain extent fulfilled—not smoothly and easily, however ; not amid the rejoicing smiles of prosperous, untroubled companions ; but as the faithful servant of his Lord Jesus Christ, "Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, and despised the shame."

In Acts xix. 23, we have an account of the cause which led to the Apostle's final expulsion from Ephesus. It was a very natural cause, the certain result of his labours during the past two years.

The number of Christian converts had so largely increased that we are told : "A certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen, whom he called together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this

craft, we have our wealth ; moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they are no gods which are made with hands, so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. And when they heard these things they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians." We seem almost to hear the ringing cry of the populace, who, for two whole hours, would do nothing but inflame each other's devotion, and drown all opposition by their fierce overwhelming cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Then, as we read the narrative, we seem almost to hear the stately, courtly accents of the town clerk, while he soothed and flattered the infuriated mob—

"Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana and of the image which fell down from Jupiter. Seeing, then, that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and do nothing rashly." Then, with a few pointed words, reminding them of the danger they were in of having to give an account of the tumult, he quietly dismissed the assembly.

Yes ; that troubled day was over at last ; but it had entirely altered the Apostle's plans. He had intended to remain at Ephesus until Pentecost, but now he must leave the city at once, for his was the name which was so odious to the heathen, and if he departed at once the Church might remain un-

molested for a time at least. Thus we are told in Acts xx. 1—

“And after the uproar was ceased Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece and there abode three months.”

CHAPTER XIII

EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS AND TO THE ROMANS

ST. PAUL "came into Greece, and there abode three months," after leaving Ephesus. For we read in Acts xx. 2: "And when he had gone through those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, and when he had spent three months there—" (Revised Version). Three months in Greece, and we do not know how long on his way there through Macedonia; but it is generally supposed that the whole journey occupied about nine or ten months at the least, since we know that the Apostle was at Ephesus shortly before the Feast of Pentecost, and purposed to keep it there (1 Cor. xvi. 18); and we know also that when driven from Greece, he sailed from Philippi, after the Passover, which succeeded it, in order that he might keep the next Pentecost at Jerusalem. During this journey the Apostle visited not only Greece, in which we may feel well assured he visited the church at Athens, on his way to Corinth, but also he travelled northwards, for we read in Rom. xv. 19 that his preaching extended even to Illyricum, on the shores of the Adriatic. To this period of St. Paul's ministry we are indebted for three of his longest apostolic Epistles—the two to the church at Corinth, as well as that to the Romans,

having been written at this time. The first Epistle to the Corinthians is superscribed as having been sent from Philippi. Some commentators think that we may, to a certain extent, set aside these superscriptions ; yet I tremble to do so. I would rather see whether I cannot discover the link which binds the superscription and Epistle together, as Dr. Paley, my first great teacher on this subject, would teach us to do. To me, then, it seems not only probable, but almost certain, that while St. Paul was still at Ephesus he received from the church at Corinth the letter to which his first Epistle is an answer. Immediately after he had written his reply to the church at Corinth, but before he had despatched it, the tumult arose at Ephesus which compelled his immediate departure. He took the Epistle with him to Philippi, and may also have added some particulars, and from thence sent it to Corinth by Timotheus, whom we know he had sent into Macedonia shortly before, and who was doubtless there when he arrived. This seems to me a very simple and natural solution of the difficulties which surround the superscription and the Epistle itself.

The reasons which induce doubts as to the superscription are simply these. If we suppose it to have been written altogether at Philippi, how are we to understand 1 Cor. xvi. 5 ? If the Apostle was at Philippi when he wrote, why did he say to the Corinthians : " Now I will come unto you when I shall pass through Macedonia, for I do pass through Macedonia "—and again in verse 8 of the same chapter, " But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost "—and again in verse 19, " The churches of Asia salute you ; Aquila and Priscilla salute you " ?

The whole Epistle bears the impress, as Dr. Paley and all admit, of having been written at Ephesus. We have only to remember the hurried compulsory departure of St. Paul from Ephesus, and we can easily understand how it came to pass that it was sent from Philippi, although written principally at Ephesus. The Apostle in verse 9, while rejoicing in the great work before him, still perceives that he has "many adversaries"; little did he guess that those adversaries were already preparing to banish him from the city.

And now, we ask, why was that Epistle written when the Apostle intended to visit Corinth so soon? Dr. Paley teaches us the reason with remarkable clearness and faithfulness.

The Corinthian Church had written to the Apostle for instruction concerning certain matters of Christian law, such as "eating things offered unto idols," the veiling or unveiling of women in public worship, &c.; but, as Dr. Paley points out, although the Corinthians had thus written for instruction concerning the details of ceremonial observances, they had never even hinted to the Apostle the terrible crime which had been committed in their church by a so-called "member of Christ"—a sin so terrible that, as St. Paul told them, it polluted the whole Church. Again, they never told him of the divisions which had arisen in the church; but he tells them that he has heard of them, and gives them the names of his informants (1 Cor. i. 11), where he also tells them that he "partly believes it."

Having thus rebuked, exhorted, and given instructions for the excommunication of the impenitent sinner, the Apostle pleads for charity—that charity

which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the *truth*; that charity which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; that charity which never faileth. Then, led on by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the Apostle breaks forth into that sublime chapter xv., which has been the consolation of Christian deathbeds and has consecrated the last sleep of the Christian for more than eighteen centuries, in every quarter of the world.

Was that Epistle read to the assembled church by Stephanus, its first elder? No wonder there were, as we find from the second Epistle that there were, "Tears, and fears, clearing of themselves, and that godly love, which is the fruit of true repentance." So that in the second Epistle which the Apostle wrote from Philippi, when he received from Titus an account of the repentance of the church, we find in chapter vii. verse 8, the Apostle tells them—

"For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent, for I perceive that the same Epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance."

Dr. Paley supposes that the real reason why St. Paul waited for an answer to his first Epistle, before proceeding towards Corinth, was his firm determination never to visit the church while the sins he denounced still polluted it. When, however, true repentance had been shown, and the church cleared from its sin, he gladly revisited it, and "set in order" the many things which needed his presence—sending, however, this second

Epistle by Titus and St. Luke to prepare the Corinthians for his coming, while he, we may imagine, went to Athens and passed through Cenchræa as on his first journey through Greece.

It was during this stay of the Apostle at Corinth, when he abode three months in Greece, that he wrote to the church at Rome. We find in the opening verses of Rom. xvi. the reason for his writing the Epistle: "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchræa, that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succourer of many and of myself also."

Thus, we perceive that when this lay helper of the church, as she would now be called, was about to visit Rome, the Apostle himself gave her this Epistle as her letter of commendation or of introduction to the church at Rome. More than five years had elapsed since the Apostle first visited Corinth, and the Jews were now permitted to reside at Rome once more, for the prohibition lasted a very short time. Thus we perceive that when St. Paul was driven from Ephesus, Priscilla and Aquila must have followed very shortly, and have returned to their old home in Rome; for we read, "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus" (Rom. xvi. 3).

This Epistle of St. Paul to the Roman church was written to it as to a church well known—famous among all churches for faith; for in Rom. i. 8 he says that he thanks God for their "faith, which was spoken of throughout the whole world." Tacitus, the heathen historian of his time, confirms this testi-

mony of St. Paul as to the numbers of Christians at Rome, although as a heathen, who knew nothing of the Christian religion, his testimony is in the spirit of Demetrius of Ephesus. He says ("Annals," bk. xv., ch. 44): "Christians. The name was derived from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, suffered under Pontius Pilate, the Procurator of Judæa. By that event the sect of which He was the founder received a blow which, for a time, checked the growth of a dangerous superstition; but it revived soon after, and spread with recruited vigour, not only in Judæa, the soil that gave it birth, but even in the city of Rome, the common sink into which everything infamous and abominable flows like a torrent from all quarters of the world."

Thus we may be very well assured that long before St. Paul visited Rome there were many Christians there; and, in a sense, St. Peter may be said to have founded the Roman church when he baptized the Roman centurion Cornelius at Cæsarea. We find, from the salutation sent by St. Paul in Rom. xvi., that Priscilla and Aquila were not his only friends at Rome. The church in their house is saluted (ver. 5), as it had sent salutations from Ephesus to the church at Corinth. This expression, "the church in their house," is a subject for consideration. We find in the Epistle to the Colossians that the church at Laodicæa is saluted, as well as "Nymphas and the church which is in his house" (Rom. iv. 15). Again, when writing to Philemon, the Apostle salutes "The church in thy house." We read also in 1 Cor. xvi. 15, that the Apostle, when speaking of Stephanus, whom he had himself baptized as his first convert in Corinth, says: "Ye

know the house of Stephanus, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints—that ye submit yourselves unto such; and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.”

Stephanus was one of those who, with Timothy, carried the first Epistle to the Corinthian Church from St. Paul at Philippi. We can almost believe that he had gone to Ephesus to consult with St. Paul, concerning the state of the church ; and it was to his representations, as well as those of “the household of Chloe,” that St. Paul was indebted for his knowledge of the fallen state of the Corinthian Church. Thus we perceive, that not only as in the case of Stephanus, did some Christian household devote itself entirely to minister to the saints, but that a household was formed into a small church. It gives a very beautiful picture of primitive Christianity, this household of faith formed into one family by their common faith in their one Lord, being bound into unity by His Holy Spirit. Heathen households were very large at that time ; for the family included, besides its own members, the slaves who, in their various offices, were dependent upon it, and four hundred slaves was not by any means a large number for one Roman patrician. Thus amid the horrors of the heathen households by which they were surrounded, we gain our first glimpse of the true Christian household of Faith. From the salutations in Rom. xvi., we find that the Apostle had kinsmen in Rome. In verse 7 we read “Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the Apostles who also were in Christ before me.” We do not

know who these were, nor when they were fellow prisoners with the Apostles ; there are large gaps in his history which we cannot fill up, and which it is perhaps unwise to analyse too closely, lest we fix our attention too much upon the scroll, too little upon its lesson. In this Epistle to the Romans, the sins of heathenism are denounced with unsparing and deserved indignation. No words can picture the horrible state of the morality of these days, and its polished Roman historian confesses that "Where every one was vicious, it was not considered necessary that the Sovereign should be otherwise." Although Tacitus, as far as his knowledge of right and wrong enabled him to judge, branded the infamous with infamy, yet to any one fresh from reading his pages, or those of his contemporary Josephus, the Epistle to the Romans reads like a breath from Heaven, as a voice of purity and holiness in the midst of a vile Inferno. And what is the key-note of this divine harmony, which has soothed the sorrows, consoled the tribulations, and strengthened the faith of so many myriad hearts? Simply this ; Faith in, and love for, the Divine Son of God—that Faith which alone justifies ; for, says the Apostle in Rom. viii., "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHRISTIANS' "LORD'S DAY," TROAS, ASSOS, LYCIA, PATARA, XANTHUS, TYRE

FROM the opening verses of Acts xx., we find that on this, his second visit to Corinth, St. Paul was driven away from the city by Jewish opposition ; also, that he no longer travelled alone, but Trophimus, an Ephesian friend, as well as several Macedonians, accompanied him. These were a deputation from the Macedonian Christians to the church at Jerusalem; they bore with them a Pentecostal thanksgiving contribution from the European churches, as we read in Rom. xv. 25, where the Apostle, writing from Corinth, tells the Roman Christians : " Whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you ; for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. But now I go unto Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints ; for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem." These friends seem to have preceded St. Paul, who followed them into Asia with St. Luke, for we read in verse 5 : " These going before, tarried for us at Troas ; and we sailed away from Philippi, after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them at Troas in five days, where we abode seven days."

We find from the Acts of the Apostles that the first day of the week had already been consecrated as the Christian Sabbath, or as the primitive Christian called it lovingly, "The Lord's Day." There seems to be no record of our Lord's command concerning this change in the Day of Rest, but there is ample proof of Apostolic usage. We know that for more than two centuries the Church was troubled by Judaisers, who attempted to force upon it the observance of the old Jewish Sabbath, as well as that of the Lord's Day (Col. ii. 16). Also in proof that the term "Lord's Day" had, in the Apostolic age, superseded the word Sabbath, see 1 Cor. xvi. 2, and Rev. i. 10. We can easily understand that where, in Greek and Roman cities, the Jews had gained chartered privileges for a Sabbath Day's rest, this question should have arisen. But whether the Christians, as at Rome, kept the ancient Sabbath as a fast, and the Lord's Day holy; or whether they did not in any sense observe the seventh day—the consecration of the first day of the week as the Day of Days, kept holy in remembrance of their Risen Lord, was effected in the Apostolic age. We find that at Troas, during his seven days' stay in the city (Acts xx. 7), "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not

yourselves, for his life is in him. And when he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted."

What a happy, peaceful Lord's day that must have been for the disciples at Troas, the sacred sacramental feast, with St. Paul preaching the sermon. The site of ancient Troas is now covered with a growth of luxuriant forest trees, but we still love to trace the history of the first Christian Sunday of which we have any lengthened record.

In Acts xx. 13, we read: "And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul; for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot."

Assos is somewhere about twenty miles from Troas, on the eastern side of the promontory, round which the ship sailed; thus we perceive that the events of the preceding day may have agitated the heart of the Apostle. It was at Troas he had seen the vision which had summoned him to labour in Europe; the disciples at Troas would therefore always have a peculiar interest in St. Paul's heart. The accident to Eutychus, and the Divine help which had been vouchsafed to the Apostle in his restored life—all would have tended to unfit him for ordinary communication with his companions, and so he desired to go afoot to Assos.

From the travels of Sir C. Fellowes in Asia Minor, we find that in that walk from Troas to Assos the Apostle must have passed over hills which resemble those in the Isle of Wight, the strata being considerably inclined and delicately coloured in ribbons

of grey, white, and green, of every shade, all softened by a pearly film of transparent salt, which had filtered over the face of the cliff. Salt pans filled the valley below with the appearance of a sheet of water, while the other portions of the journey were varied by magnificent forest-clothed heights, where, in that early spring tide, the pink blossoms of the almond bloomed, and the rich evergreens formed a verdant shelter for innumerable flocks of sweet singing-birds.

We may be very well assured that the Apostle's heart was refreshed by that lonely walk, and the sacred communing with his Lord, as he passed through that lovely scenery, and that when he rejoined his friends at Assos, and once more entered upon the close contact with human life in the busy ship, he was strengthened for the work appointed him.

St. Luke has left us an exact route of the Apostle's voyage ; thus we can trace him sailing past Mitylene in Lesbos, past Chios, and Samos, the old birthplace of Greek poetry and Greek philosophy, where Thales and Pythagoras, Æsculapius, and other famous sages, had looked and longed for the Gospel which St. Paul preached, and for the power of God unto salvation in which he trusted. At Miletus, about twenty miles south of Ephesus, the Apostle remained for a short time in order to confer with the elders of the church at Ephesus. The whole account of this interview is so sacred that it seems blasphemous to do otherwise than reverently transcribe it as given in Acts xx. 17—

“And from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church ; and when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know that from the

first day I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations, which befell me here by the lying in wait of the Jews, and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me; but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore, I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His Own Blood; for I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, and of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that, by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace. I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how, that so labouring, ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

“And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all, and they all wept sore and fell on Paul’s neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more ; and they accompanied him into the ship.”

This parting from the Ephesian elders must have been as sore a trial to St. Paul as it was to them, but it was now over, and he sailed on past Cos and Rhodes and then by the beautiful Lycian coast. Patara, the next port visited, was once the metropolis of Lycia, and from thence and from its neighbouring city, Xanthus, marble sculptured trophies are borne, to enrich the museums of Europe. At Patara the Apostle found a ship bound for Phœnicia, and embarking in it sailed to Tyre. At Tyre the little party remained one week, and when the Apostle departed we are told (in Acts xxi. 5) that the Tyrian disciples “brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city, and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship, and they returned home again.” Landing at Cæsarea, the Apostle was hospitably received in the home of Philip the deacon and evangelist ; and here, as at

Tyre, the prophetic inspiration vouchsafed to the primitive Church foretold the certain danger which awaited St. Paul at Jerusalem, and his mistaken friends urged him to avoid it, but the Apostle answered firmly: "What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

"And after those days we took up our carriages and went to Jerusalem; there went with us also certain of the disciples of Cæsarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple with whom we should lodge; and when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly."

CHAPTER XV

THE HEBREW CHRISTIAN CHURCH AT JERUSALEM

IN considering the state of the Christian Church at Jerusalem, when St. Paul arrived there with St. Luke and his European converts, we have to summon our imagination to aid our memory. Thus we have to consider the Hebrew Christians, first of all, as Jews, with an inspired history, a Divine revelation, a law of holiness and purity which was open to all, and whose study was obligatory upon all. Not merely the priest, the scribe, or the elder, but every Jewish child was commanded to study the sacred Law, that Law which they did so well to reverence. Yet as the acorn which falls from the oak must not pride itself upon the stately rounded stem, the firm tenacious heart, and umbrageous shelter of the parent tree alone—but if it would perpetuate the virtues of its sire, must work its way into that fertile earth from which the roots of its parent derived nourishment, and there, in the embrace of that life-giving element, extract the spirit which shall enkindle its own life—thus was it with Judaism. The parent oak was fast tottering to its fall, and the seeds which were to preserve the glory of the ancient tree of life must be rekindled by a new spirit, or rather a fresh descent of the same spirit: “He who came to His own,” and

when His own received Him not, still gave to all who did receive Him the "power to become the sons of God."

We see in St. Paul the true Hebrew Christian, loving his own nation passionately, so that he could almost wish himself accursed if it might be saved—treating the Law of his fathers, not only with the zeal of a pupil of Gamaliel, but with the reverent knowledge of the Christian, who knows that his Lord "did not come to destroy Moses and the prophets, but to fulfil them."

Thus although St. Paul was intensely Hebrew, he was a Christian to his very heart's core. Faith in Christ, love to Christ, gratitude to Christ—this was the key-note of his own life who said that "the love of Christ constraineth us."

We find then that although, in writing to the Corinthian Church, the Apostle clearly shows that he was aware that the types of the old dispensation had been fulfilled, and that "Christ our Passover hath been sacrificed for us"; although he teaches the Corinthians how the feast must be kept by the Christian, "not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v. 7, 8)—we find that when he arrived at Jerusalem, the old associations awakened the old reverential submission to the Law of his fathers.

The Feast of Pentecost was simply a thanksgiving festival for the fruits of the earth, and was, in no sense, a sacrificial festival, as was the Passover or the solemn Fast of the Day of Atonement. Thus we can quite understand the Apostle's wishing to retain the observance of this

festival, and yearly exhorting the European Christians to prove their gratitude for the benefits they had received by sending Pentecostal contributions to Jerusalem.

Yet we find that this was not all. When once the Apostle found himself under the shadow of the sacred temple, within hearing of the solemn service which arose in ceaseless prayer or melodious songs of praise through every changing day and night—that temple in which he had prayed the prayers of fervent youth, and in which he had seen, after his conversion, his risen Lord, and received from Him the Apostolic commission to “Depart unto the Gentiles”—when St. Paul once more found himself in his old spiritual home, is it any wonder that he submitted himself to the authority of St. James, and consented to offer the vow of the Nazarite in the temple, as a publication to all whom it might concern, that he was still a faithful Jew, and walked orderly, that he was not one of those impostors who infested the whole nation, and tempted people to despise not merely the ceremonial Law of Moses, but the very Decalogue itself?

It was the Pentecostal feast, and St. Paul had brought from Greece and Macedonia large contributions to the mother church at Jerusalem. It would be interesting to know whether the knowledge that this was so had anything to do with stirring up the tumult against the Apostle. As a rule, all Pentecostal offerings went into the Temple treasury. It is just possible that the absence of any rich offerings in the Temple, and the knowledge that large contributions had been given to

the Christians, may have raised that storm of intense hatred, of passionate madness, with which the Apostle was assailed. We read in Acts xxi. 27 that before the legal term of purification from sacrifice was quite accomplished, "and when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the Temple, stirred up all the people and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Jerusalem, help! This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the Law, and this place; and further brought Greeks also into the Temple, and hath polluted this holy place. For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus, an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the Temple. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together, and they took Paul and drew him out of the Temple, and forthwith the door was shut! And, as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar, who immediately took soldiers and centurions and ran down unto them; and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. Then the chief captain came near and took him and commanded him to be bound with two chains, and demanded who he was, and what he had done? And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude; and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle."

The door of the Temple at Jerusalem was now shut upon St. Paul for ever, and the next four or five years of his life were spent in prison; he had attempted to prove his reverence for the old decay-

ing form, but the Holy Spirit protested against this attempt to serve two masters. He who at the first Christian Pentecost inspired His Apostles now closed the old Temple doors against them ; for in the course of but about fourteen years these Temple doors were enclosed by a besieging army of Romans, and were finally consumed by devouring fire.

We find in Acts xxii. 25 that St. Paul barely escaped scourging that day from the Romans, in addition to the blows he had already received from the mob. "The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging, that he might know wherefore they cried against him ; and as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by : Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned ? When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed that thou doest, for this man is a Roman. Then the chief captain came and said unto him, Tell me, Art thou a Roman ? and he said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom ; and Paul said, But I was free born." This assertion of his privileges as a Roman citizen saved St. Paul from any further hard treatment ; he was kept in close confinement that night. On the following day, the chief captain summoned the Sanhedrim, in order that the charge against St. Paul might be formulated ; but amid the strife of rival sects, Pharisees, and Sadducees, and rival high priests, no possible unity could prevail ; and once more the chief captain had to remove his prisoner into the

castle for safety from the mob. That night when the chief captain found from St. Paul's nephew how bitter was the antagonism of the Jews against his prisoner, he decided to send him away to Cæsarea, the Roman civil and military capital of the province, where he would be secure from the bigoted passions of the populace of Jerusalem.

If a series of photographs could record the life of St. Paul as it is presented to us in the New Testament, those which recorded the Jerusalem period would open with a young, earnest, patient man, standing sternly to guard the clothes of those witnesses who were stoning the martyr Stephen to death. The last Jerusalem photographs would picture the same young man bronzed by exposure to the storms of nearly thirty added years ; but he no longer stands as an accuser and persecutor. He lies panting beneath the blows of an infuriated mob, who have driven him from the Temple, until released by Roman soldiers from certain death ; he begs from them permission to plead with his persecutors for submission to the authority of that Jesus whom he once persecuted. We should see him standing upon the stairs which led to the Castle of Antonia, and from thence haranguing his enemies, until his assertion that he had received his commission in the Temple itself to preach unto the Gentiles, aroused all their selfish national bigotry, and they lifted up their voices and said : "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live" (Acts xxii. 22). We should then, by the aid of the sweet Syrian sunlight, gain one picture of St. Paul passing into the citadel of Jerusalem,

and then, after the lapse of a few days, the scene at Jerusalem would be closed, for night shrouded the departure of the Apostle from the city, and when morning arose he was travelling towards Cæſarea, guarded by Roman soldiers.

CHAPTER XVI

CÆSAREA—FELIX, FESTUS

THE city of Cæsarea was somewhere about fifty miles north of Jerusalem, upon the sea-coast. It had been originally a small Syrian city, called Strato's Tower, but had been raised to its present state of magnificence by Herod the Great, who, although he was such a merciless tyrant, was also one of the most energetic builders of cities upon record. Herod had lived in Rome so long, and had so many Roman friends, that he had at Cæsarea called into existence all which his polluted taste admired at Rome, as well as all those triumphs of engineering skill for which Rome was so justly celebrated. The breakwater, which rendered the harbour of Cæsarea so commodious, was constructed, as we are told by Josephus, "by letting down vast stones of above fifty feet in length, not less than eighteen in breadth and nine in depth, into twenty fathoms deep; and as some were lesser, so were others bigger than those dimensions. This mole, which he built by the sea-side, was two hundred feet wide. . . . Now, there were edifices all along the circular haven, made of the most polished stone, with a certain elevation, whereon was erected a temple that was seen a great way off by those that were sailing for that haven, and had in it two statues—the one of Rome, the other of Cæsar. The city itself was called Cæsarea,

which was also built of fine materials, and was of a fine structure. Nay, the very subterranean vaults and cellars had no less of architecture bestowed upon them than had the buildings above ground. Some of these vaults carried things at even distances to the haven and to the sea; but one of them ran obliquely, and bound all the rest together, that both the rain and the refuse of the citizens were together carried off with ease; and the sea itself, upon the flux of the tide from without, came into the city, and washed it all clean. Herod also built therein a theatre of stone, and on the south quarter, behind the port, an amphitheatre capable of holding a vast number of men, and admirably situated for a prospect to the sea" (Josephus, "Antiquities," bk. 15, ch. 9, sec. 6).

Cæsarea now lies desolate, but its ruins form a rich quarry for the neighbouring builders; and remains of the fort, also some remains of the ancient breakwater, and even of the subterranean vaults, seem to be within the reach of modern explorers. In his travels Mr. Buckingham describes at length the ruins he found, while Dr. Clarke found traces of far richer spoils in the gardens of a neighbouring Pasha, where some pillars of yellow variegated marble of extraordinary beauty were said to have been spoils from Cæsarea. As, however, similar marble columns abound amid the ruins of the ancient city of Ptolemais, or Acre, about fifty miles north of Cæsarea, it would be difficult to say which city was meant.

A tower still stands erect amid the ruins of Cæsarea's ancient fort, and it is supposed to be the tower of Drusus, a portion of the original Herodian city. If this be the case, St. Paul must

have looked upon it, even if he were not confined within its walls.

Somewhere within the wave-washed city of Cæsarea St. Paul was imprisoned for two years—two eventful years of his own life, and of the world's history ; for during that time, the Emperor Claudius died, and Nero was raised to the imperial throne.

Claudius Lysias, the chief captain of the guard at Jerusalem, had sent St. Paul to Felix, who was still governor of Judæa. We find in Acts xxiv. that Felix summoned Paul's accusers to Cæsarea, in order that they might prove their accusations against his prisoner. The case of Paul of Tarsus was no slight one ; it was deemed worthy of the presence of the high priest and elders of the council, who brought with them a celebrated orator named Tertullus, in order that he might influence the pliant Felix to their will. We Christians have been familiarised with the scene before Felix from our earliest childhood. The defence of St. Paul has been read and pondered by every British child, and the words never pall upon the ears of manhood, but will ever refresh the flagging faith of the Christian. The high priest and elders, we may imagine, hoped to influence Felix with law ; but Paul had claimed his rights as a Roman citizen, and even Felix dared not outrage these rights ; he saw it was a question of religious jealousy, and said : "When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him."

Once more we, in Acts xxiv. 24, read that St. Paul

was summoned before the Roman governor to plead his cause, and that Felix brought his wife Drusilla, the Jewess, to hear her eloquent countryman "concerning the faith in Christ; and as he reasoned of righteousness, of temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him; wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and conversed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix's room, and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound."

During two years a prisoner at Cæsarea, but a free man in Christ, it is generally believed that it was during this period of seclusion St. Paul assisted St. Luke in writing his Gospel, and possibly a part of the Acts of the Apostles. It seems very clear from the history that St. Luke was present when the Apostle was brought up for trial; we know that St. Luke accompanied him from Macedonia to Jerusalem (see Acts xxi. 17, where the plural "We were come to Jerusalem," &c., proves this), and he also accompanied the Apostle on his journey to Rome. We may therefore easily believe that he was one of those friends who were permitted to soothe the imprisonment of St. Paul, and that to their united labours, "perfect understanding," and authentic information, we owe the Gospel of St. Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles, written by St. Luke.

When Felix had at last been deposed from his governorship of Judæa and been summoned to Rome to give an account of himself, the new governor Festus very naturally excited the hopes of all parties.

He remained but three days at Cæsarea, and then proceeded to Jerusalem, the spiritual metropolis of the province. There were of course many suppliants to the new governor, and when the high priest and council found a fitting opportunity they took care to state their case against the Christian Apostle who was captive at Cæsarea. Festus answered them with all respect for their office, as well as for the rights of his prisoner. "Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man if there be any wickedness in him. And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Cæsarea, and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought (Acts xxv. 5). And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove." Festus must have felt this case a most extraordinary introduction to his duties. He was, however, extremely anxious to conciliate the restless, turbulent people he had come to govern; so asked St. Paul if he would go up to Jerusalem, and there in his presence be tried, where his offences were said to have been committed. But the Apostle knew well the utter impossibility of obtaining a fair trial at Jerusalem upon any supposed infringement of the Mosaic Law. So he answered firmly, "I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged; to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest; for if I have been an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if there be none of these things whereof they accuse me, no man may deliver me

unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar." Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, "Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? Unto Cæsar shalt thou go."

It was after this appeal to Cæsar, but before the Apostle had been sent to Rome, that the young King Herod Agrippa came to Cæsarea to salute the new governor. Berenice, the beautiful sister of the young king, accompanied him, and they came attended with all due pomp and splendour. This son of Herod Agrippa I. was in many respects true to the best interests of his country. It is very evident that St. Paul knew his character; since he said, when brought before him, "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews; especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews."

We find from the history of Josephus that this young King Agrippa was a singularly learned and politic prince, apparently not devoid either of religious feeling or of sincere sympathy with his fellow countrymen. Having been considered too young at the time of his father's death to receive the full authority over his kingdom, he had afterwards received from the Emperor Claudius an increase of territory. King Agrippa used his best endeavours to dissuade his fellow countrymen from their last fatal revolt against Rome, but was utterly powerless to prevent it. Josephus gives us the oration in which the young king pleads for present submission to the dominant power. And it certainly proves him to have been not only "expert in all customs

and questions which are among the Jews," but proves also that he had a perfect acquaintance with the resources of the great Roman empire.

Festus had (most probably at his own request) procured for the young king and his sister an opportunity of hearing the eloquence of the most distinguished among their living countrymen, and it is curious to note in the account as given in Acts xxvi. what different effects were produced upon the minds of those who heard St. Paul speak. When the Apostle spoke of the central theme of His preaching, "the resurrection of Christ from the dead, that He should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles," the Roman governor cried out with a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning has made thee mad." But King Agrippa had the blood of Aaron and of his descendants in his veins; and when the Apostle turned and appealed to their common knowledge, their common ancestry—"King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest"—the young king answered wistfully to an appeal which no Roman could understand, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." In these simple words of this descendant of the unfortunate Mariamne, who was the descendant of Jewish high priests, there was almost a national acknowledgment of the truth of Christianity, and there was a royal acquittal in the words which followed shortly afterwards: "Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed unto Cæsar."

St. Paul appealed unto Cæsar at Cæsarea, and some 325 years afterwards his appeal received an

answer from Cæsar at Cæsarea; for the first Christian emperor of Rome wrote this epistle to Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea. I shall quote the whole epistle from the page of Socrates Scholasticus (book i. chapter ix.) :—

“Victor Constantine Maximus Augustus, to Eusebius, of Cæsarea,—In the city which derives its name from us a very great multitude of persons, through the assisting providence of our Saviour God, have united themselves to the Most Holy Church, so that it has received much increase there. It is, therefore, requisite that more churches should be provided in that place; wherefore, do you most cordially enter into the purpose which I have conceived. I have thought fit to intimate this to your prudence, that you should order to be transcribed, on well-prepared parchment, by competent writers accurately acquainted with the art, fifty copies of the sacred Scriptures, both legibly described and of a portable size, the provision and use of which you know to be useful for the instruction of the Church. Letters have also been despatched from our clemency to the Vicar-General of the Diocese, in order that he may take care to provide all things necessary for the preparation of them. Let this task be your responsibility, that these copies may be got ready as quickly as possible. And you are authorised, on the warrant of this our letter, to use two of the public carriages for their conveyance; for thus the copies which are most satisfactorily transcribed may be easily conveyed for our inspection. Charge one of the deacons of your church with this commission, who, when he has reached us, shall experience our bounty. May God preserve you, beloved brother.”

In the copies of those sacred Scriptures thus transcribed for the instruction of the Church by the most powerful of the Cæsars, the Epistles of St. Paul, the prisoner of Cæsarea, formed a most important part; and but three centuries after that appeal of St. Paul to Cæsar, there was a Christian bishop of Cæsarea ready to receive and act upon all commands of the Christian emperor for the welfare of the Universal Church.

CHAPTER XVII

MURDER OF ST. JAMES, EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL, ST. JAMES, ST. PETER, AND ST. JOHN

WE can easily understand why St. Paul had appealed to Cæsar. For him, life in Judæa was now impossible ; we may say indeed that his life was no longer safe in any city where the Jews were sufficiently powerful to injure him.

Very shortly after St. Paul had set sail for Rome, and the judgment seat of Cæsar, St. James the Just (as he was called, even by his enemies) found himself unable to steer the Christian church at Jerusalem safely through the troubled sea of politics amidst which it attempted to preserve its life. St. James was beaten to death by clubs at Jerusalem, but about eight or nine years after St. Paul was saved from the same fate by Roman soldiers. This murder was perpetrated in the interval which elapsed between the death of Festus and the arrival of his successor, when there was no authority at Jerusalem to control Jewish bigotry, and protect the weaker Christians from martyrdom. (Josephus, bk. 20, ch. 9).

Those who read the sacred Epistle of St. James cannot fail to notice the different effects of the operation of the Holy Ghost. The whole Epistle reads like that of the bishop, whom St. Paul revered so highly as to submit his own judg-

ment to his superior wisdom, yet in so doing, found that obedience to his commands led to bonds and imprisonment. Yet through those bonds and imprisonments, the prisoner of the Roman empire grew stronger in faith, and was borne by the Roman law to a fuller freedom, a far more extended field of usefulness, than he had ever dared to hope. Gentleness, moderation, and charity, breathe in every word of the Epistle of St. James; it seems to prove so plainly that the scribe had never come into direct contact with those sins of heathenism which St. Paul had seen in every heathen city he visited. In reading the Canonical Epistles of the four great Apostles, it seems as though St. Paul stood in the outer court of the Church of Christ; he sees with clear eyes, but pitying heart, the sins and pollutions of the heathen world. While denouncing the sins he sees, St. Paul raises high the standard of faith in Christ, and it is no uncertain note of warning, or of invitation, which he raises. Faith in Christ, love to Christ, a faith which works by love—this is his ceaseless cry.

St. James seems to gather the new converts together in an inner court. He gently reproves their sins, and warns them against the temptations to which the Christian is exposed. The outer world is scarcely heard in the Epistle of St. James. It is to the brethren he writes. They are, it is true, scattered among the twelve tribes; but their faith in their Lord Jesus Christ is assured—they have to be taught how to do His work.

Then, in another court, we find St. Peter leading us to the Good Shepherd Himself, confirming our faith by his own personal experience, when he

says: "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty" (2 Peter i. 16). To each Christian St. Peter leaves as a legacy a word of counsel, of reproof, and for all an outpouring of that Divine love which filled his own heart for his Lord and Saviour—that fervour of faith which enabled him to say, as he welcomes the wanderers to the fold of his Lord, "Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Peter ii. 25).

Then when the light of earth grows dim, and the duties of this life are fast fading away, we seem to hear from the innermost recesses of the sanctuary the voice of the beloved Apostle of our Lord. He leads us to the Light of the World to come, to the Life of the risen soul. St. John does not in his Epistles speak of the duties of this world, saving only that we must not deceive ourselves by saying that we have no sin; yet, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His Commandments." We are warned, however, to keep ourselves from idols; that the Commandments we keep are in truth those of our Lord; and if we would receive the full revelation of His love Who shall "wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying," we must learn upon earth His lesson: "This Commandment have we from

Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 John). Thus while we know well that there is but one Holy Ghost, how various are His manifestations, how diverse His gifts! and we can never be sufficiently thankful to Him who has preserved for our use those sacred Testaments of our Lord which include the divinely inspired Epistles of His Apostles.

St. Paul little dreamed, when he set sail for Rome as a prisoner, that a future emperor would write to a bishop of Cæsarea, commanding him to assist in the work of disseminating those Holy Scriptures which every heathen emperor had done his best to destroy.

The journey of St. Paul to Rome was neither smooth nor untroubled. He embarked in a ship bound for Adramyttium, a port in Mysia, not far from Troas. The centurion who was in charge of the prisoners treated St. Paul and his companions with all courtesy, and gave him leave to visit his friends at Sidon when the vessel touched at that port. Sailing by the southern coast of Asia Minor, the ship next touched at the city of Myra.

Of Myra, in Lycia, Sir Charles Fellows gives us a most charming picture in his "Travels in Asia Minor." He says of Lycia generally: "I feel as if I had come into the world and seen the perfection of loveliness and was satisfied. I know no scenery equal in sublimity and beauty to this part of Lycia. . . . Myra was among the most important of the Lycian cities, and its ruins appear to be little injured by age. The city must have extended far over the plains in front of the rock. On the plains of Myra are scattered many ruins,

but at great distances from each other." At Myra, St. Paul and his companions were transferred to an Alexandrian ship bound for Rome, with a large cargo of Egyptian wheat, as well as many passengers. Still coasting the Asiatic shore as far as Cnidus, the south-western promontory of Caria, they sailed between the islands of Rhodes and Cos towards Salmone, on the eastern shore of Crete. I suppose they must have sailed round the southern shore of Crete, as the term "under Crete" implies, for the city of Lasea, near to Fair Haven, which has been discovered, is about midway on the southern shore of the island. Lasea still retains its ancient name. It was discovered by the Rev. S. Brown in 1856, who found the ruins of two temples, and many remains of Grecian architecture and a great city.

Clauda, the little island mentioned in the account of the voyage, is now called Gozzo. It is about seven miles long and three broad, and is off the south-west coast of Crete. Phenice, or Phœnix, the port for which the captain was steering when driven from his course, is said to have been where Lutzo now stands, on the narrowest part of the island, very nearly opposite the little island of Clauda.

It was late autumn, the great Day of Atonement was passed, and navigation in the Mediterranean is always dangerous during the winter months. The squalls and sudden storms are well known even in these days, when "the wind Euroclydon" has but changed its name, not its nature. It was in the flames of the furnace that the King of Babylon saw "the Son of God" strengthening the souls of His

faithful servants, and it was in the horrible darkness of a tempest-tossed vessel that He vouchsafed to comfort and support the heart of His faithful servant, St. Paul. In Acts xxvii. 18 St. Luke tells us: "And we, being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship, and the third day we cast out, with our own hands, the tackling of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away; but, after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss; and now I exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, Whose I am and Whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul. 'Thou must be brought before Cæsar, and, lo! God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

The Apostle never doubted the truth of this revelation of his Lord's will. He had served him for more than five-and-twenty years, and had never yet found His promise fail. Nor was his faith disappointed now. The ship was wrecked upon the island of Malta; but—some on boards, some on broken pieces of the ship, some by swimming—all escaped safe to land.

The Apostle remained with the rest of the company three months at Malta, nor was he idle during that time. The healing gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the power over venomous reptiles granted to the Apostle, produced that reverence among the bar-

barous people which enabled him to fulfil his ministry in many ways. The simple-hearted people believed him to be a god at first, nor did their gratitude suffer him to depart without recompense, for when at last the *Castor and Pollux* finally carried St. Paul away for Rome, his little party was, as we are told, "honoured with many honours, and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary." After a stay of three days at Syracuse, in Sicily, and of one day at Rhegium, the ship sailed on to Puteoli in the Bay of Naples. Here there were Christians, and here the Apostle and his friends received permission to rest for several days. Then once more onwards to the great imperial city, and Cæsar's judgment seat. From Puteoli to Rome the journey was by land, and at the Appia Forum, about forty-three miles from Rome, the Roman Christians (to whom doubtless information of St. Paul's arrival had been forwarded from Puteoli) met the party of prisoners, "whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage" (Acts xxviii. 15).

Wearied out with his journey, and with the restriction placed upon his movements by his long imprisonment, we have not yet heard one word which implies any sign of weariness, or of a failing heart in the great Apostle; and it is but by these few words we discover how sorely he needed human sympathy—"he thanked God, and took courage." Very possibly, nay, most probably, there were many of those to whom the Apostle was personally known who met him at the Appia Forum, the great midway station between Puteoli and Rome. He may have been welcomed by the faithful Aquila and Priscilla, or by his kinsmen, Junia and Andronicus; we do

not know ; we only know that they were brethren in Christ, and that when St. Paul saw them, "he thanked God and took courage."

Upon arriving at Rome, the centurion in charge delivered up all his prisoners to the captain of the guard, "but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him."

Very little restriction seems to have been placed upon St. Paul's liberty of action in Rome : he invited all whom he chose to see him, and had full liberty to write to whom he would. The Apostle had only been three days in Rome when he invited the principal Jews residing in the city to visit him. In Acts xxviii. 17 the interview between St. Paul and the Roman Jews is thus recorded :—

"And when they were come together, he said unto them : Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me ; but when the Jews spake against it I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar ; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause, therefore, have I called for you to see you, and to speak with you, because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

"And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judæa concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee ; but we desire to hear of thee, what thou thinkest, for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against. And when they had appointed him a day there came many to him

into his lodging, to whom he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning till evening."

One whole day employed in his beloved work of endeavouring to "win souls unto Christ," must have been a refreshment to the Apostle, and we are told that he did win some, for "some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not."

When the Apostle found that contention was arising among his hearers, he obeyed his Lord; he had been commanded to depart unto the Gentiles. And now the history of St. Paul, as it is recorded for us in the Acts of the Apostles, closes with his own full acceptance of his mission. "Be it known, therefore, unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came unto him, preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

From the Acts of the Apostles we have now learned our lesson connected with the history of St. Paul. The writer, St. Luke, stays the narrative at Rome. He gives us no account of the termination of the trial, or of the result of St. Paul's appeal unto Cæsar. We have no account of the events which took place during those two years of the Apostle's imprisonment at Rome. We are left to inference, from slight notes in the Apostolic Epistles written during that time, and to the later records of the age which immediately succeeded that of St. Paul and his fellow labourers.

CHAPTER XVIII

EPISTLES TO THE PHILIPPIANS, EPHESIANS, AND PASTORAL EPISTLES — PERSECUTIONS OF CHRISTIANS

WE learn from the Epistle to the Philippians that when the church at Philippi heard of the imprisonment of the Apostle, it made a large collection, apparently not merely of money, but of all such things as it believed the Apostle would need, and sent its bounty to Rome by Epaphroditus. The church at Philippi deserves the thanks of all succeeding ages for its faithful love ; for to it we owe that Divinely-inspired Epistle which Epaphroditus bore back with him to the church when he returned to Macedonia. How many hearts have turned to that Epistle in their hours of deepest trial, and have been strengthened and supported by the same Divine Spirit Who inspired it ! How many suffering slaves, toiling in the mines or chained to the oar of some Roman galley, have, in the brief intervals of labour, drawn forth from its hiding-place the scroll upon which some Christian scribe had copied this Epistle, and have received fresh strength for endurance, fresh vigour for labour, while they read of Him " Who made of Himself no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant ; and, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto Death—even the death of the Cross."

When a heathen emperor issued persecuting edicts against the Church, one of the clauses always enacted that the "books of the Christians must be destroyed." In the last great persecution under Diocletian, bonfires burned in every great city of the empire, which were lighted solely by the treasured Scriptures of the Christians, which had been torn from the churches or reft from the bosoms of the martyrs. We gather from the early histories of the Church that, in the first century, it had already become a fashion among the wealthier Christians to carry about their persons some beautifully illuminated copy of a gospel, or of some special portion of Holy Writ, as a sort of talisman. Of course, there is an excess of superstitious reverence for the outward form; yet the affectionate, reverent devotion for the Sacred Word itself can never be too high, and we owe very much to those loving, saintly-souled Christians who amid the sophisms of heathen philosophy and the distractions of "science, falsely so-called," treasured for our use these sacred Scriptures, even from the flames which consumed their own bodies.

We find that, during this imprisonment, St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Church at Colossæ, as also to one of its members—Philemon. These two Epistles were sent by Tychicus and also by Onesimus, the slave who, having run away from his master, Philemon, had been converted at Rome by St. Paul, and awakened by him to a sense of Christian duty. We learn from the Epistle to Philemon that St. Paul was in expectation of a speedy release, and intended to visit Colossæ when free, for he says (ver. 22): "But withal prepare me a lodging; for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you."

Dr. Paley thought that the Epistle to the Ephesians was written at this time also, and I suppose that he may be right. Yet I cannot fail to remark here that Dr. Paley does not seem to have noticed 2 Timothy iv. 12. The reverend doctor considers, as nearly the whole Christian Church does, that this second Epistle to Timothy was written during the last imprisonment of St. Paul; yet we find that he has sent Tychicus to Ephesus. Dr. Paley never notices this in all his remarks upon the Epistle to the Ephesians. It seems to me that the Epistle to the Ephesian Church, which was in reality written to the church over which Timothy presided, was written during the second, and not the first, imprisonment of St. Paul; and also that the second Epistle to Timothy was written when he was not in Ephesus, but Tychicus knew where to find him. I cannot at all assent to the criticisms of Dr. Paley upon this Epistle, deeply though I revere his learning. The inspiration of the Holy Ghost, as given to the Apostle, seems to me to be far apart from his criticism. Yet, if it be true that the same idea frequently recurs at the same period, I would point out the Spiritual armour and warfare (Eph. vi. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7). This idea is not in the Colossian Epistle. Writing his second Epistle to Timothy, the Apostle tells him he has sent Tychicus to Ephesus, and then to him gives those personal details, not appropriate to a canonical Epistle. The Epistle to the Ephesians is superscribed: "Written from Rome to the Ephesians by Tychicus." This view of the case will explain many things. All personal matters are discussed in the Epistle to Timothy; while the Epistle to the church at Ephesus, that church in which he

had laboured so long, is just what we should have supposed it would be. It reads as though the Apostle were taking his last farewell of it. Death stood before him face to face, and amid the warfare of the tempest-tossed city, tossed upon the vile waves of the tyranny of Nero, the Apostle sees from his prison cell the risen Saviour of Jew and Gentile, and beseeches the church to walk worthy of the vocation to which it is called, and to "put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil; for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Every Christian duty is summed up and enforced in this Epistle, as though it were to be a final farewell to the Apostle's ministry, although it seems to show that it was not the first the Apostle had written to the church.

Whether this Epistle was written during the first or second imprisonment of the Apostle we cannot tell. If during the first, some six years had elapsed since the Apostle was at Ephesus; and many changes would have taken place during those years. Thus we find that, during the time which elapsed between St. Paul writing to the church at Rome when he was at Corinth, and the time when he wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, Priscilla and Aquila had returned to Ephesus, for he sends salutations to them. This may seem to imply that they had been able to escape from the great persecution in the city of Rome under Nero.

Of the little we do know concerning the later life of St. Paul, the record is painfully brief. We know

that he was released at the end of two years, and that he wrote to Philemon of Colossæ desiring him to prepare him a lodging, but we do not certainly know that he fulfilled his purpose of visiting the churches in Asia. Although we have no certain record of this period of the Apostle's life, there seems to be a general belief that he did revisit most of the churches he had founded, and the Epistle to Titus is supposed to have been written at this time. This Epistle is superscribed as having been written from Nicopolis of Macedonia, and it is, I believe, generally supposed the Nicopolis meant is the city in Epirus, near to Actium, which may possibly, from its near neighbourhood, have been at that time included in the Macedonian jurisdiction. As Titus was the first bishop of Crete, this Epistle, wherever it was written, seems to be a special legacy to that island, and it is the very last link we have in the chain of the Apostle's wanderings. We know that he told the Roman church he intended to visit Spain, and it is generally supposed that he did do so. There were Christian churches in Spain, Southern France, and even Britain, at a very early date. But for us a cloud hangs over this period; there is a silence in the Apostle's life, which is broken by no canonical Epistle, which finds no faithful St. Luke to picture. Once more, and only once, the silence is broken by the Second Epistle to Timothy, and (if I am correct in my conjecture) the Epistle to the Ephesians. The Second Epistle to Timothy is generally allowed to have been written during the Apostle's last visit to Rome about six or seven years after his release from his first imprisonment. There is a tradition well supported, that during these two years, when St.

Paul dwelt in his own hired house, he was visited by St. Peter. This seems very probable, and we can easily believe that the two Apostles brought the infant Roman church into a regularly organised body. During the six years' absence of the Apostles from Rome, the Christian church had largely increased, and in the year A.D. 64, the Christians were so numerous, and had aroused the jealousy of the heathen priesthood to so great an extent, that the Emperor Nero determined to fix upon them the odium of having set fire to the city of Rome. The account is given by Tacitus thus: "A dreadful calamity followed a short time after, by some ascribed to chance, and by others to the execrable wickedness of Nero. The authority of historians is on both sides, and which preponderates it is not easy to determine. It is, however, certain that of all the disasters that ever befell the city of Rome from the rage of fire, this was the worst, the most violent, and destructive. . . . A suspicion prevailed that to build a new city, and give it his own name, was the ambition of Nero. Of the fourteen quarters into which Rome was divided, four only were left entire, three were reduced to ashes, and the remaining seven presented nothing better than a heap of shattered houses half in ruins. . . . The infamy of that horrible transaction still adhered to him (Nero). In order, if possible, to remove the imputation, he determined to transfer the guilt to others. For this purpose he punished, with exquisite tortures, a race of men detested for their evil practices, by vulgar appellation called Christians. . . . They were put to death with exquisite cruelty; and to their sufferings Nero added mockery and derision. Some

were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and left to be devoured by dogs ; others were nailed to the cross ; numbers were burnt alive ; and many, covered over with inflammable matter, were lighted up, when the day declined, to serve as torches during the night " (Tacitus, " *Annals*," bk. 15, ch. 44).

We can but wish that Tacitus had seen the Christians' gospel ; he would, I feel well assured, have rejoiced to receive it. But Tacitus was like so many others : he did not trouble himself to read the books of so plebeian a sect, but believed what his priests told him concerning them ; yet to the *Annals* of Tacitus we are indebted for our knowledge of this first great persecution of the Church. Tacitus wrote about thirty years after St. Paul's death. Christian writers tell us that St. Paul did not suffer during the first outbreak of persecution, but coming to Rome shortly afterwards, before the persecuting edicts were repealed, he was imprisoned. St. Peter arrived at the imperial city shortly afterwards, and the two Apostles suffered martyrdom together. St. Paul, as a Roman citizen, was beheaded ; while St. Peter suffered crucifixion.

Surely it must have been at this time, or in connection with this persecution, the Evangelist and beloved disciple " heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps, and singing that new song which no man could learn but those which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth ; " those, too, of whom the voice from Heaven said : " Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them " (Rev. xiv.).

CHAPTER XIX

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

WE have now followed St. Paul from subject Syria to imperial Rome ; from the footstool of Rabbi Gamaliel to the tribunal of Nero. We have witnessed his first affectionate efforts to secure a hearing in the numerous synagogues of his nation, which were then, as now, to be found wherever there was busy commercial life ; and from whence, we may be sure, some leaven of the holiness and mercy of the older Law spread almost unnoticed among the heathen who knew not God, as he had revealed Himself to His chosen people. These synagogues, in which the Ten Commandments were rehearsed, the holy Psalms sung, the sacred prophecies read, Sabbath by Sabbath—surely, these were cities of refuge where hunted souls could shelter, and await the coming of the new High Priest whose advent was to bring their redemption. The summons of St. Paul to the Apostleship was a miraculous one ; the promise held out to him was one which would not tempt many men. “I will show him how great things he must suffer for My sake,” said the Lord to Ananias, who baptized the Apostle. We have seen some of the great sufferings of St. Paul, and the rest of the promise has been fulfilled also—for the Lord said, “He is a chosen vessel unto Me,

to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel."

The fulfilment of a prophecy was said to be the test, as to whether the Lord had spoken by the prophet under the Mosaic Law ; and the fulfilment of this prophecy should be allowed as evidence of the inspiration of St. Paul ; for is there one city in Europe where the Epistles of St. Paul are not treasured as a part of that Gospel, that New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which he was commissioned to bear before Gentiles and Kings ? Not one.

"And the children of Israel ?" We believe that this promise has been fulfilled also, for were not the Apostles "children of Israel" ? Most of the early Christians were ; and though there still remain many Hebrews from whose hearts the veil has not yet been removed, we pray that the time may speedily arrive when they also may claim their rightful heritage, for the Word which spoke to Moses and to Elijah speaks to them also by the inspiration given to St. Paul. There is one Epistle specially addressed to the Hebrews, one which bears within itself the proof of its ancestry ; for to understand it, we need a large acquaintance with Hebrew history and Hebrew teaching.

The Epistle to the Hebrews would have been words without meaning to the Areopagites at Athens, yet to the Christian it is one of the most precious portions of Holy Writ. We do not know when this Epistle was written, and some writers suppose that Apollos was the author ; but apart from the superscription itself, the internal evidence seems clearly to prove this to be a mistake. We have no reason

to suppose that Apollos was specially inspired by the Holy Ghost to write His commandments for the universal Church, as was St. Paul. Apollos never saw our Saviour, or received His commission personally, as did the other Apostles. It may be said that St. Mark and St. Luke did not know our Saviour. We do not know that they did not. St. Luke was supposed to have been one of the seventy sent out by our Saviour ; and of St. Mark nothing is known certainly, but that from the earliest time when his Gospel was received by the Church, it was said to be, in fact, the Gospel of St. Peter, but written by St. Mark under the Apostle's eye. The Epistle to the Hebrews seems to bear in every line the trace of St. Paul's hand. If we read the concluding verses of Heb. v. : "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God : and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness ; for he is a *babe*. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." In the opening verses of 1 Cor. iii. we read : "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto *babes* in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able, for ye are yet carnal." Again, we can compare the 2 Cor. iii. from the fifth verse, with the whole tone of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the similarity of expression is clear. The opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and

the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians from the twelfth verse, are identical almost. To quote a few verses from Hebrews: "God Who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake, in times past, unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of His Majesty on high." If we compare this with Col. i. 13: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son in Whom we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible or invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by Him, and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Space will not permit continuing the extracts, but examples might be multiplied proving the similarity of expression between the teaching of St. Paul in his acknowledged Epistles and that of the Hebrews, for we cannot forget that St. John is the same St. John when inspired by the Divine Word to record the Gospel, or write the Epistles—only under the disturbing influence of the prophetic visions of Revelations does his style alter; and St. Paul is still St. Paul in his line of argument, whether writing to the churches or preaching in the synagogues, or as

when rapt in holy submission to receive the teaching of the Holy Ghost, and transmit it to his beloved kinsmen in their own native Hebrew tongue. The Epistle to the Hebrews is supposed to have been written to the church at Jerusalem. This church was in perilous circumstances during the whole of the Apostle's labours, and within ten years of his death was practically extinct; for when Jerusalem was taken by Titus the Christians fled to Pella, beyond the Jordan. We may easily believe that they carried their Epistle with them, and thus it would be comparatively unknown, while the Epistles to the wealthy and flourishing European churches, or those to the churches of Ephesus and Colossæ, &c., would be in large circulation at once; for they, doubtless, were written in Greek.

I could almost imagine that this Epistle had been penned at Cæsarea in the seclusion of its prisons, and concluded at Rome, from whence it was sent by Timothy, who must have been released from some imprisonment of which we have no record in the Acts. My reason for thus thinking is simply this. We know that St. Paul suffered expulsion from Jerusalem in consequence of his attempt to subject himself once more to the old Mosaic ritual, and once more offer the old sacrifices. When the Temple door was finally shut upon him, and he was imprisoned for two years, it seems but natural that he should have been inspired to understand the abrogation, full and entire, of the Mosaic Ceremonial Law, and that this Epistle is its expression. How sublimely it opens! as though the sacred scribe were in complete harmony with those eternal notes, whose tones reverberate through all time, for the healing

of all mortal sorrow, the aspiration after all celestial faith. The scribe ascends from all earthly thoughts and desires, to that High Priest "Who is a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec." He at length fully perceives that although driven out from the tottering Temple at Jerusalem, "we have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle," and as Melchizedec, the priest of the Most High God, brought forth the mystic bread and wine from ancient Salem to greet the Father of the Faithful, so also does our High Priest after the order of Melchizedec meet with His faithful friends and servants who, having slain the beasts of their carnal affections, their envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness, upon the sacred altar of remembrance of the love of Christ for them, find ever present by that altar their great High Priest, Who not only ever liveth to make intercession and atonement for them, but also as the Saviour of their fainting weary souls, feeds them with the bread of Heaven, nourishes them with His own life, and leads them into that continuing city whose builder and maker is God—that city which St. Paul has already entered, and towards which he bids us direct our steps, still "looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. xii.)

CHAPTER XX

MARTYRDOM OF ST. PAUL AND ST. PETER—FULL ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR MISSION BY THE UNI- VERSAL CHURCH

THERE are few men or women who have not lost a beloved friend or relative—few who do not remember for long years the deep, anguished pain of the days succeeding their loss, when, at last, we were compelled to recognise the bitter truth, that we should never again see the beloved or revered form, or hear again the ever welcome, ever heart-refreshing voice, whose tones still vibrated in our heart. We remember well the pangs of heart with which we collected every letter, every token of affection from the departed, and treasured all as sacred relics, praying earnestly, as we laid them aside, that some day we might be reunited in the heavenly home with that beloved soul, whose loss from our earthly life we so deeply mourned. If this has been our case, if we have lamented so deeply the loss of those to whom we once turned in all times of trial for counsel, for sympathy, or for affection, then we can understand something of the feelings of those churches which had been in personal connection with the two great Apostles when the news of their death was received. The general persecution of the Church caused many mourners in families connected with Rome. Individuals wept for the loss of their

friends, although they doubtless rejoiced in the steadfastness of the martyr's faith. But the loss of St. Peter and St. Paul did not fall upon individuals alone: whole churches lamented as they could scarcely have done before—lamented because they had lost familiar friends, as well as inspired Apostles. Some six or seven years had elapsed since St. James the Just, the aged Bishop of Jerusalem, and kinsman of our Lord, had been beaten to death by clubs and stones at Jerusalem; but greatly as he was revered and beloved by those who knew him, he had never left the Holy Land, as far as we know. His duties were centred in Jerusalem after our Saviour's death—the father of the whole Church, ever at home to welcome labourers, or receive the children of the house with paternal affection. When St. Peter and St. Paul were cut down, very, very bitter must have been the cup of sorrow which was passed on from the church of Rome to Corinth, from Corinth to Macedonia, from thence to Asia, while it would be accepted at Jerusalem as a sure sign of the approaching desolation, as indeed it was; for the two great generals who were the appointed scourges for the destruction of Jerusalem, were already on their way to the siege of the devoted city—Vespasian and Titus receiving the commission for the war in Judea within two years of the death of the two Apostles.

In the midst of this storm-tossed outer world, we can picture to ourselves the different churches realising more fully the Divine mission of St. Paul, with whose voice and personal presence they had been so familiar, that his awful commission had never been fully realised. Thus, the Corinthians had so often seen him making tents, to earn his daily bread, that,

in their eyes, Apollos, the learned Alexandrian, was St. Paul's peer, and might be placed upon the same level with either of the Apostles, who had been set apart by our Lord Himself. Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch, who was martyred under the Emperor Trajan, was a young man at the time when the two Apostles suffered ; if he had not actually seen them he knew those who had ; and we perceive that in the time which had elapsed since their death, and his own journey to the amphitheatre of his own martyrdom, the true position of the Apostles in the Church had been accepted. It could be no longer, "I am of Paul, and I of Cephas, and I of Apollos," but even the saintly, revered Bishop Ignatius, when writing to the Romans, says—

"I do not as Peter and Paul command you. They were Apostles." When the homely, well-known figure of St. Paul had been taken from their midst, the truth dawned upon the Church universal. One had been among them who, like Moses, Elijah, or Isaiah, had been admitted to the awful mysterious privilege of receiving a revelation from the Omnipotent Himself. To St. Paul, as to St. Peter, when upon the Mount of Transfiguration, the verities of the world unseen by mortal senses had been unveiled, and the God Who spake to Moses and the prophets had indeed spoken to St. Peter and St. Paul, with commands for His people and commissioned work for his service. Thus, before the century closed, which we Christians call Anno Domini, the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter had been collected, and included in that sacred volume, which is set apart for the record of the "Word of God, Who spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, but in these last days by His Son."

Those who have in early youth learned from the Rev. Dr. Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, can surely never forget the deep pleasure they experienced in following his train of reasoning, and, as they followed, gaining such fresh, clear glimpses of the reality of the scenes through which St. Paul passed. Years may have caused them to diverge in some respects from their revered teacher's conclusions; yet no lapse of time can lessen their gratitude to him, or their wonder at the grasp of his subject, the power of his research, which any attempt on their own part to follow in his steps, only places in a clearer light. No one who has ever attempted to write out a consecutive life of St. Paul can underrate the labour, learning, and truthful spirit of Dr. Paley. He seems to have been raised up in an age of infidelity to confirm wavering faith or ignorant affection, while his great initial lesson of the harmony between the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul, can never be undermined.

CHAPTER XXI

FRIENDS OR COMPANIONS OF ST. PAUL

IN closing these brief sketches of the life of St. Paul, a few words must be said respecting his friends. It is a large subject, one which will amply repay study, but a few words only can be given here. We look back to the dark day when the news of the Apostle's death reached the churches, and thus looking, we see some of the mourners. There were three friends of the name of Gaius, at least. Gaius of Corinth comes first, not because we know him to have been the oldest friend or disciple of the Apostle, but because we do know that St. Paul baptized him ; for the Apostle, when writing his First Epistle to the Corinthians, says in ch. i. ver. 14 : "I thank God I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius." Crispus, we know, was the chief ruler of the synagogue, until he became a Christian on St. Paul's first visit to Corinth. But who was Gaius ? He seems to have been a wealthy man, able to exercise generous hospitality, for St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans in his house on his second visit to Corinth ; for we read in Romans xvi. 23, "Gaius, mine host, and of the whole church saluteth you." Was this Gaius of Corinth the Gaius of St. John's Third Epistle ? We do not know. The second friend of St. Paul whose name was Gaius, was a native of Derbe, a fellow-citizen of Timothy, and,

doubtless, a friend. We hear nothing of him until after St. Paul's second journey through Galatia and Phrygia. Thus, it seems to me very likely that when St. Paul visited Derbe, this Gaius may have joined company with him, as we are told in Acts xviii. 23, St. Paul "went down to Antioch, and, after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went all over the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples." Now, if he did not certainly visit Derbe on his way from Antioch to Galatia, it seems, at any rate, very likely that he did, or Gaius may have gone to Ephesus alone. His and Timothy's connection with the church at Derbe quite accounts for his presence at the gathering of friends, who accompanied St. Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem, where we find him among the fellow-passengers who accompanied St. Paul into Asia. We do not hear of his going on to Jerusalem. He may have landed at Patara, and thence travelled home.

Thus, there seems a natural reason for Gaius of Derbe's voyage with the Apostle. He had been to Ephesus, seen his old friend Timothy, and returned in the same ship with the Apostle. Still, there was another Gaius, of whom we know little, saving that he was a friend of Aristarchus, of whom we seem to know a good deal. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles says, in ch. xix. ver. 29, when describing the tumult at Ephesus which caused St. Paul's expulsion, "And the whole city was filled with confusion, and, having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord," &c.

This is the only notice of Gaius of Macedonia ;

but his friend, Aristarchus, is named as being, with him, "Paul's companions in travel." Can this mean that these two were "those that conducted Paul to Athens" (Acts xvii. 15)? We find that Aristarchus was a Thessalonian (Acts xx. 4). Some one did go with St. Paul from Thessalonica to Berea, and also some one conducted him to Athens. Who so likely as a native of the country? Again, this may mean that Aristarchus and his friend Gaius were fellow-travellers in those journeys which St. Paul took during his stay for two years at Ephesus. Thus, in the Epistle to the Colossians, and also in that to Philemon, Aristarchus is named as sending his salutations, not only to Philemon, but also to the church—thus, as it seems to me, proving that both he and St. Paul had a personal acquaintance with the members (Col. iv. 10; Philemon 24). This Aristarchus of Thessalonica was with St. Paul on his last voyage to Jerusalem; with him, also, on his voyage to Rome (see Acts xxvii. 2); with him in Rome, and apparently a fellow-prisoner, for it is "Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner," who sends his salutation to the Colossian church. It was "a man of Macedonia who summoned St. Paul to Europe." A Macedonian shared his labours and his imprisonment. The churches of Macedonia have preserved for us three sacred Epistles, and as we read that to the church at Philippi we can but see that the Macedonians were not ungrateful; they revered St. Paul, and proved their love and reverence by the fruit of care for his temporal needs. Highly honoured by his Lord as St. Paul was, he seems also to have been greatly beloved by many friends even in his lifetime, while every passing century has but in-

creased the number of his grateful, lowly learners who have, with heart and soul, thanked the Lord of St. Paul for the grace given to His servant.



Wave high his banner. Unto God
 Give thanks for giving us St. Paul.
 Strange was his Christian birthright ;
 No sweet promise of untroubled life
 Was given ; no earthly pomp or gain,
 But the Divine sad presage :
 " I will show him suffering great,
 Which he must suffer for My name."
 No ease was promised thee, St. Paul !
 No pleasant paths by running streams,
 Whose melody should soothe thy soul.
 The blessing given to thee in baptism
 Was the Cross of Christ, in which thou gloried.
 " The world was crucified to thee, and thou to it."
 Great Herald of Salvation ! Thine the toil
 Of bearing messages from Mercy's Lord
 Far from sweet Salem, over land and sea.
 We, Gentile outcasts, hold the blessings brought by thee ;
 But unto thee was given, suffering from scourge, and fetters,
 The bruised, stoned body, while thy soul
 Suffered sharp pangs, from failing friends estranged.
 How often thou didst feel the weary, longing pain
 Of the sad, lonely heart, which longed to be with Christ !
 Yet, nerved by Him, still laboured and endured
 All suffering for the sake of those Christ loved.
 And yet, Saint Paul, thy labours, thine afflictions
 Have lightened half the burdens of this weary world.
 Millions, while listening to thy words,

Have learned from thee the sacred Faith
Which kindles Heaven-born love—
Divine, unfailing Charity from God above.
Thou, too, St. Paul, didst teach to us the sacred song :
“ I am persuaded neither life,
Nor death, nor angels, principalities,
Nor powers, things present or to come,
Shall separate our souls from God,
Or His deep love in Jesus Christ our Lord.”
How many weeping souls, by new-made graves,
Have raised their hearts with thine to God,
Who taught His servant to reveal to us
That sacred faith in the immortal life
Through Christ our Lord Who died and rose for us.
Wave high the banner of St. Paul,
Which conquered Rome, and Colossæ,
Corinth, and Ephesus, Britain,
Gaul, and all the outmost world ;
Which still, where'er it waves,
Bears on the conquest over sin and death,
And clears the pathway for the Eternal King,
Whose kingdom is pure righteousness and love.
To God give thanks for His great grace and love
Which crowned St. Paul through suffering for his home above.



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